

Cyprus rejects U.S. call for more talks

NICOSIA (AP) — Greek Cypriots on Saturday rejected a U.S. call for more discussions on resolving the deadlock in the U.N.-sponsored peace talks for the reunification of the war-torn island. Government spokesman Yannis Cassoulides said the government was not prepared to accept further discussion of the latest U.N. proposals following their rejection by the Turkish side. He was commenting on a statement in Athens Friday by Robert Lamb, the U.S. State Department coordinator on Cyprus, who said he wanted to continue his efforts to resolve the deadlock for two more weeks. Mr. Lamb flew to Athens from Nicosia following his failure to resolve the impasse during two days of intensive separate meetings with Greek-Cypriot President Glafos Clerides and Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash. Mr. Lamb was scheduled to visit Ankara also over the weekend in his continuing quest to get the Turkish side to accept the U.N. proposals. Mr. Lamb's intention to continue his effort for two weeks was seen as a move by Washington to forestall any U.N. attempt to blame the Turkish side for blocking progress towards resolving the situation.

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S. Arabia urges continued Iraq ban

RIYADH (R) — Saudi Arabia called on Gulf Arab allies on Saturday to campaign vigorously against any easing of U.N. sanctions against Iraq, saying Baghdad is still a threat. "The Iraqi regime continues to pose a threat to the security and stability of our states," said Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal in opening remarks to a meeting of foreign ministers of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council. Prince Saud also called on Iraq to be a good neighbour and stop repeating claims of sovereignty over three islands disputed with the United Arab Emirates in the lower Gulf. "We hope Iraq responds to the voice of reason in the matter of the islands, so as to arrive at a final solution by peaceful means, thus proving... that its policies are those of a good neighbour," Prince Saud said. Prince Saud said Iraq was making contacts across the Arab World to seek support for the lifting of sanctions imposed by the United Nations after the 1991 Gulf war, before Baghdad had fully complied with U.N. resolutions set after the war. "It is necessary that this meeting... confirms the firmness of our stand (that Iraq must fully comply with the resolutions)," Prince Saud said.

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Police due in Gaza, Jericho on Thursday

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The vanguard of a Palestinian police force will arrive in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho on Thursday, a top Palestinian leader said in a statement on Saturday. "The number of the police force will be 1,500. One third of them will be stationed in Jericho and the rest in Gaza, the statement released by Faisal Al Hussein said, without specifying how many would arrive in the first group. The police force entering Gaza would come from Yemen, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Sudan while the force in Jericho would come from Jordan and Iraq, the statement said. The commander of the force would be Nasr Yousef, it said.

Hata to visit Mideast in April

TOKYO (R) — Japan's Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata will visit Egypt, Israel, Syria and Jordan from April 29 through May 8 to promote the region's peace efforts, Kyodo news agency reported on Saturday. A Japanese foreign minister last visited the Middle East in May 1991, when he then minister, Taro Nakayama, toured the region.

Turkish official warns new Islamic mayors

ISTANBUL (R) — Newly elected Islamist mayors of Ankara, Istanbul and other Turkish cities may be prosecuted if they deviate from secular policies, the interior minister said on Saturday. "Those mayors who go beyond their authority and deviate from the path shown by (Kemal) Ataturk and go against his principles will face legal action and be prosecuted in court," Anatolian News Agency quoted Interior Minister Nihat Metase as saying. Mr. Metase was referring to the election of pro-Islamic Welfare Party (RP) mayors in many Turkish cities, including Istanbul, in municipal polls on March 27. He made the statement after reports that Islamic zealots in Istanbul had threatened women in modern dress and forced them off public transport in Turkey's largest city following the elections.

Egyptian opposition leader on trial

CAIRO (R) — The leader of the Egyptian opposition Labour Party and the editor of the party newspaper went on trial on Saturday charged with libelling Prime Minister Ataf Sedki, the editor said. Ibrahim Shukri and the editor of Al Shaab, Magdi Hussein, face charges arising from articles in the paper alleging that Dr. Sedki protected a building contractor who was arrested in January and charged with corruption. The trial has been adjourned until May 8 to give defence lawyers more time to prepare their case. Mr. Hussein said. The maximum penalty for criminal libel is seven years in jail or a fine of 500 Egyptian pounds (\$150). Mr. Hussein said he and Mr. Shukri would go to trial on Tuesday on identical charges brought by Cairo Governor Omar Abdul Akher, and again on Thursday on the same charges, this time brought by Zakaria Azmi, head of President Hosni Mubarak's office.

N. Korea's ruling party closes meeting

TOKYO (AP) — More than 10,000 leading members of North Korea's communist ruling party ended an unprecedented three-day meeting in Pyongyang Saturday after showing their loyalty to President Kim Il Sung and his son, official reports said. The official Korean Central News Agency, monitored in Tokyo, said the conference of "party cell secretaries," the first in the Workers' Party's 49-year history, was initiated by Kim Il Sung's son, Kim Jong Il. Analysts believe the meeting was an effort to rally support behind the leadership of the two Kims.

Israel, PLO agree on 10,000-strong police

Arafat said to have Rabin's assurance that pullout will be complete by April 30

Combined agency dispatches

TWO SENIOR Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials said Saturday that Israel had agreed to a 10,000-strong Palestinian police force in the autonomous areas, up from the figure of 8,500 Israel had accepted earlier.

Israel's acceptance of a larger force came during last week's negotiations in Cairo on a security package for the West Bank town of Hebron, the two PLO officials confirmed in separate telephone interviews in occupied Jerusalem and Cairo. Both spoke on condition of anonymity.

The PLO's top negotiator with Israel, Nabil Shaath, was more guarded Saturday. "We have not yet agreed on the number but what I said earlier (was) that the two figures were close and that the agreement should not be a problem," Dr. Shaath told the Associated Press in Cairo.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokesman, Gad Ben-Ari, would not confirm or deny the report. "I cannot relate to anything that goes on in the negotiations between the two parties," Mr. Ben-Ari said.

The PLO initially had demanded 10,000 policemen for

the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Israel wanted a much smaller force and eventually accepted a contingent of 8,500.

But in the wake of the Feb. 25 Hebron mosque massacre, the PLO demanded better protection for Palestinians, and the two PLO officials said Israel last week agreed to a larger force.

Israel also agreed to permit the return of more than 30 Palestinian activists who were expelled by the army from the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the uprising against occupation, said Ahmad Tibi, a senior aide to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The list of names has been compiled, and Israeli and PLO negotiators will work out last details of the expellees' return when they meet Sunday in Cairo, Dr. Tibi said.

Palestinian reporters in Gaza said PLO headquarters in Tunis had sent a preliminary list of 26 names of returnees to the PLO office in Gaza. The returnees were to cross from Egypt into Gaza on Monday, the Palestinian reporters said.

Dr. Tibi said Mr. Arafat would fly to Cairo within the next few days and would likely meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak by midweek.

"They will talk about the need for rapid implementation" of the autonomy accord for the Gaza Strip and Jericho, Dr. Tibi told AP.

Dr. Tibi said it was still possible for Israel and the PLO to sign an autonomy agreement by April 13, the original target date for having completed troop withdrawal and handover of authority to the PLO. "We hope that during the next two weeks, negotiations can be completed," Dr. Tibi said.

Both sides have agreed to begin with implementation even while negotiations are continuing. A vanguard of several dozen Palestinian police is to arrive in Gaza and Jericho this week.

A key Palestinian demand in the negotiations is a timetable for releasing all Palestinian detainees from Israeli jails. Dr. Tibi said the PLO wants all prisoners released in time to participate in general elections, which under last September's outline agreement on autonomy should be held no later than July 13.

Israel says about 8,200 Palestinians are held by Israel, while the PLO puts the number at around 11,700.

(Continued on page 5)

Norway and Denmark to send Hebron observers despite threat

OSLO (Agencies) — Norway will be ready to send observers to the troubled West Bank town of Hebron by the end of next week despite threats of attacks from a Palestinian group, a senior official said on Saturday.

But Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Egeland also said Norway was not certain whether it could supply 90 of the 160 European observers as requested by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The other 70 are to come from Italy and Denmark.

"We will be able to have the first people in place by the end of next week if needed," Mr. Egeland told Reuters in a telephone interview. "But there are a great number of details still to be worked out, from uniforms to security arrangements."

Mr. Egeland said Islamic Jihad, a Palestinian group opposed to the PLO-Israel accord on Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip, had threatened to attack Norwegian observers.

"Their aim is to derail the peace process. We will not let

them do that. Our aim is to ensure its success," he said.

A Jewish settler almost wrecked the peace deal, secretly brokered in Norway last year by a tiny group of Norwegians including Mr. Egeland, by shooting dead dozens of Palestinians in a mosque in Hebron on Feb. 25.

Norwegian officials would

continue meetings on Saturday to discuss the question of the observers, armed with pistols for self-defence.

"They want 90 of the 160 to come from Norway. Whether we'll be able to deliver that many from a small country remains to be seen. We'll make a big effort," Mr. Egeland said.

Of the planned 90, Mr. Egeland said more than half were likely to be backups for the observers themselves including administrators and medical staff.

He said that the commitment was for three months. "We hope that by then peace will have overtaken the need for the observers," he said. Norway is seeking observers from the police, the armed forces and volunteers.

On Thursday in Cairo, Israel and the PLO signed the deal to station observers in Hebron, the first time Israel has agreed to an international presence in the occupied territories since it seized them in 1967.

On Sunday, Norwegians Kjell Johansen, ex-commander

Assad receives Yeltsin message; 'Russian initiative is still alive'

DAMASCUS (AP) — President Hafez Al Assad received a message Saturday from his Russian counterpart, Boris Yeltsin, dealing with the Middle East peace process, which Moscow is working to propel. The official Syrian News Agency (SANA) said the message was delivered by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov during a meeting with Mr. Assad.

Russia and the United States are co-sponsors of the current peace process, launched by a Mideast peace conference in Madrid in October 1991.

Mr. Ivanov is on a Middle East tour to promote Russia's call for convening another conference to push forward an Arab-Israeli settlement.

Such a conference would mean a high-level representation.

The United States is opposed to the idea, and wants the process to continue in the form of separate, bilateral talks between negotiating teams from Israel and each of the main Arab parties — Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians.

Mr. Ivanov said on arrival late Friday that the "Russian initiative is still outstanding and its practical implementation depends on the position of all parties concerned."

He said Yeltsin's message to Mr. Assad was related to "peace efforts and the Russian leadership's attempts to overcome the post-Hebron massacre situation."

"My discussions in Syria will cover ways of achieving progress in the faltering peace talks as well as ways of bolstering bilateral cooperation with Syria," Mr. Ivanov said. "We believe that Syrian-Russian cooperation has a special importance at this sensitive stage of the Mideast peace process."

Syria was Moscow's chief Arab ally before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, state-run Damascus Radio accused Israel of preventing progress in the peace talks "by refusing to

Israelis wound 8 in Hebron

HEBRON, Occupied West Bank (R) — Israeli troops shot and wounded eight Palestinians in clashes in the occupied West Bank town of Hebron on Saturday, hospital officials said.

They said two men, aged 20 and 21, suffered serious bullet wounds and the other six were slightly wounded by rubber bullets while throwing stones at soldiers. The Israeli army said it was checking the report.

Hebron has been a centre of Arab-Israeli violence since the killing of dozens of Muslims by a Jewish settler in a local mosque on Feb. 25.

Under a deal on security for Palestinians signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Thursday, Norway, Denmark and Italy will send 160 observers to Hebron this month.



KING VISITS SOUTH: His Majesty King Hussein Saturday visited the command of the southern military region where he was received by its commander and several of its officers. King Hussein, accompanied by their Royal Highnesses Prince Hamzah and Prince Hashem, was briefed by the commander on the region's military units' duties and training activities. King Hussein also visited one of the frontline units where he met with its officers and personnel. He also visited several other military units in the region.

Jordan sees Hebron deal as positive but says more needed

AMMAN (I.T.) — The government on Saturday welcomed an Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement for security in the West Bank town of Hebron as a positive step towards Middle East peace.

But Information Minister Jawad Al Anani said Jordan believed those security arrangements will not achieve their full aims if Israel does not remove Jewish settlers from Hebron to prevent a repeat of acts of violence against the Palestinian people.

"The government considers this pact as a positive step on the road towards a comprehensive and peaceful settlement that would lead the Palestinian people to regaining their basic rights over their national soil," he told reporters after a Cabinet meeting.

"The Cabinet also reaffirmed that the security measures, provided for in this pact,

offer protection for Hebron and its holy sites....," he added.

The PLO gave Jordan a copy of the pact hours after it was signed in Cairo on Thursday. The Israel-PLO agreement calls for some 160 Norwegian, Danish and Italian troops to go to Hebron to monitor the security situation after a Jewish settler killed dozens of Palestinian worshippers there on Feb. 25.

They will have no police or military functions. The pact paved the way for resumption of talks on an accord for limited Palestinian self-rule in Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Dr. Anani said the Council of Ministers on Saturday reviewed a report submitted by the finance and interior ministers about their visit last week to Zaqra Governorate where they examined problems related to state-owned land illegally seized by squatters who have built homes without licence.

The Council has approved immediate arrangements to help end the problem by allowing the squatters to acquire legal ownership of the buildings and lands if they pay for them to the treasury in accordance with the Lands and Survey Department's decisions in this respect, Dr. Anani said.

He said the Cabinet decided that 80 per cent of the lands involved in the problem in Zaqra and Ruseifa should be settled by July 31.

Dr. Anani also said that the Cabinet reviewed the outcome of a visit by Justice Minister Taber Hikmat to France where he examined judicial systems and sought French assistance in dealing with judicial matters in Jordan.

The Cabinet also reviewed a report by Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas about his participation in an Arab health ministers meeting held recently in Cairo.

Another month in response to a Yemeni request," an Arab official close to both governments told Reuters.

The move came after a flurry of contacts between Jordan, Oman and Yemen.

Jordanian, Omani and Yemeni officers along with the U.S. and French military attaches in Yemen are members of a committee formed to disengage rival troops in line with a Yemeni reconciliation pact signed in Amman on Feb. 20.

King Hussein and Oman's Sultan Qaboos Ben Said had been in favour of pulling out after a rise of violence in Yemen, the officials said.

But President Saleh and Vice President Beidh have said they wanted Amman and Muscat to continue efforts to help Yemen's march towards peace, they added.

N. Yemeni party says Gulf states arming south

SANAA (R) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh's party accused Kuwait and Saudi Arabia on Saturday of financing arms purchases by his main rival, the Aden-based Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) of Vice President Ali Salem Al Beidh.

Disputes between Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh, who ruled former North and South Yemen respectively until the two merged in 1990, are threatening to tear the country apart once again.

Sources in Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) said the two Gulf states, which fell out with Sanaa over its perceived support for Baghdad after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, wanted to encourage the south to end the merger.

One source said aircraft and ships "carrying weapons, ammunition and food supplies

financed by the states of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to help forces of secession within the YSP to put an end to (Yemen) unity" had arrived at ports and airports in the former South Yemen over the past three days.

The charges followed last week's accusation by Mr. Beidh that Mr. Saleh's GPC was deploying banned weapons, including poisonous chemicals, a charge denied by Mr. Saleh.

The sources gave no details of the type of weapons and ammunition, or the amount of food supplies. They did not say where the arms and ammunition came from.

There was no immediate comment from the YSP.

Political sources in the former North Yemen have spoken privately in recent months of alleged Kuwaiti and

Saudi support to the YSP in its dispute with the GPC. But this was the first time they made such charges.

YSP officials, including Mr. Beidh and his deputy, Saleh Saleh Mohammad, have over the past few weeks visited Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Egypt and Syria.

The visits angered the GPC as an attempt to mend fences at their expense. And Mr. Saleh himself paid visits to Egypt, Syria and the UAE.

Arab officials in Amman said on Saturday Jordan and Oman were likely to carry on their efforts to disengage rival army units in Yemen after considering pulling out at one stage.

"There is a high possibility of extending the duration of the involvement of the Omani and Jordanian officers by

Libya demands AMU partners ease embargo

TUNIS (R) — Libya demanded on Saturday that the five-country Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) take firm steps to ease the trade embargo imposed on it after the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.

"We expect this summit to take crucial decisions and concrete steps," top Libyan official Khouelidi Hamidi said at the opening of a two-day AMU summit.

The union, which groups Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, was founded in 1989 to forge a common market across North Africa stretching from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

Despite its lofty aims, the AMU has made little real progress towards economic integration mainly because of political disputes within the region.

Foremost among these is Libya's longstanding criticism of its AMU partners for applying the United Nations embargo imposed after the

Lockerbie bombing, which killed 270 people.

Mr. Hamidi, who represented Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi at the meeting, said in a long speech that a clear way for the union to carry out its aims would be to ease Libya's lot.

"We must make concrete all these intentions, which requires a unity of will and a unity of security," he said.

A member of the Libyan delegation said Colonel Qadhafi did not attend the summit because of the embargo, which prohibits international flights to and from Libya.

"If he could have come by plane he would have come," he said.

Mr. Hamidi came from Tripoli to Tunis by road. Morocco's King Hassan also did not attend the meeting, which has been postponed three times because of Libya's conflict with the West and be-

cause of Algeria's civil strife.

King Hassan sent Prime Minister Karim Lamrani in his place. Algeria's President Liamine Zerroual, making his first trip abroad since he was appointed two months ago by his country's military leadership, is to take over the AMU's rotating presidency from Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali at the summit.

Few diplomats expect the meeting to yield much progress on economic integration although Maghreb officials said some economic accords are expected to be signed.

At its inception the union had many ambitions, among them setting up a free trade zone by 1994, achieving customs union by 1995 and even founding a common airline.

Maghreb officials admit the difficulties of welding together five countries that span 4,500 kilometres, each with its particular economic and political system.

U.S. talks on Aqaba blockade delayed

AMMAN (I.T.) — Jordanian officials said on Saturday a Washington meeting of top U.S. bodies in charge of searches of ships heading to the Kingdom had been postponed until next week.

The meeting to review the searches aimed at goods that might be transhipped to Iraq, initially had been scheduled to be held at the State Department on Thursday, Reuters said.

It has been delayed until next Wednesday to allow more time to study a three-month-old Jordanian proposal to replace offshore with onshore inspections by a third party.

His Majesty King Hussein said Monday Jordan would not resume peace talks with Israel if the disruptive searches by U.S.-led navies enforcing U.N. trade sanctions against Iraq continued.

Officials say the inspection has been tightened recently to pressure Jordan into signing a peace deal with Israel.

Under the proposal expected to be discussed by U.S. officials on Wednesday, the sea-based inspection by the U.S.-led forces will be moved to the port of Aqaba.

Information Minister Jawad Al Anani said Tuesday that Jordan felt that the proposal was not given the proper attention it deserved since enough time had passed for studying the proposal but no action had been taken.

A group of Jordanian officials, businessmen and shipping agents held a televised debate last week with the secretary of the U.N. Sanctions Committee. They explained the negative impact of the sanctions enforcement in its present form on Jordan's economy. The Sanctions Committee official promised that the Kingdom's grievances will be placed before the committee.

Clinton: Syria doing too little on drugs

SAN DIEGO (R) — President Bill Clinton Friday criticised Syria in an annual report for doing too little to stop illicit drug trafficking, thus retaining a designation some State Department officials had hoped would be lifted.

Mr. Clinton also added Nigeria to the annual list of countries not doing enough to fight illegal drug production. Burma and Iran were cited as well for failing to stem the flow of narcotics. The designation means the four countries cannot receive U.S. aid.

Some State Department officials had recommended Syria be removed from the list of major narcotics-producing and transit countries because of modest steps taken to fight the opium trade in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, which is largely controlled by Damascus.

But some members of congress and aides to Secretary of State Warren Christopher objected to the move. Mr. Christopher overruled the lower-level officials who made the recommendation and ordered Syria retained on the list, U.S. officials said.

Mr. Clinton and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, meeting in Geneva in January, set up a framework for dealing with bilateral differences, including Syria's inclusion on the U.S. list of countries that sponsor "terrorism." But a U.S. official said not much progress has been made on resolving problems between the two countries.

Mr. Clinton had urged Syria to return to Middle East peace talks with Israel, and Damascus is scheduled to rejoin the peace process later this month.

Oil spill hits coast of UAE

DUBAI (R) — Oil from a tanker collision washed onto the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) coast on Saturday. Pollution crews rushed to the area.

"Some oil has come on shore north of Khor Fakkan and we are beginning to clear the area," said Captain Roger Saunders, general manager of the Fujairah port.

He said the oil was "fairly extensive" on an Arabian Sea beach north of Khor Fakkan, but had not reached its bay or resort area. Khor Fakkan, close to the Strait of Hormuz, is a holiday spot popular for its sandy beach and coral reefs.

Capt. Saunders said the slick was "in patches. It is not continuous and in some areas it is closer to the beaches than others."

Capt. Yanni Kaimenakis, operations manager for a Greek firm mounting the cleanup operation, said earlier Saturday the 30-kilometre slick was spreading north and four to five kilometres from the shore.

"The slick is moving closer to the beaches because of heavy currents. It will be a major problem if it reaches the beaches because it will be more difficult to deal with," he told Reuters by cellular telephone from one of his firm's vessels.

Capt. Kaimenakis said 7,000 to 8,000 tonnes of crude lost from a tanker after a collision on Wednesday night had formed a slick stretching from the main port of Fujairah past the port of Khor Fakkan to the north.

Capt. Kaimenakis's shipping and anti-pollution firm Fair-deal has four skimmers dealing with the spill off Fujairah, some 100 kilometres from the Gulf's entrance at the Straits of Hormuz.

The 57,211-tonne UAE tanker Baynunah, which was in ballast, and the fully-laden 293,238-tonne Seki collided some 16 kilometres from Fujairah port. There were no casualties.

A leak in the Seki's port side tank number one has been blocked and small amounts of oil that were still spilling from the Panamanian-flagged super-tanker were stopped on Friday.

"The crews managed to empty the leaking tank into other storage tanks. The tank is now empty of oil," Capt. Saunders said.

Capt. Kaimenakis said one skimmer has so far collected 1,200 tonnes of oil, but did not have information on three other skimmers.

Company officials said on Friday 900 tonnes were collected.

Capt. Saunders told Reuters a pollution expert from the London-based International Tankers Owners Pollution Federation, Hugh Parker, has arrived in Fujairah and started helicopter flights over the area of the spill.

The accident posed a risk of a major pollution disaster in one of the world's busiest shipping lanes which is already plagued with spillage left over from the Gulf and Iran-Iraq wars.

Rabin assures opposition no plan to shift settlers

TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has assured opposition leaders that there are no plans to evacuate Jewish settlers from Hebron, but reports said that an evacuation could take place within weeks.

"The prime minister said he would not uproot Jewish settlements," Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu told Israel Television after the meeting. "His exact words were... 'that idea is not on the agenda now.' The word 'now' perturbs me."

Opposition groups strongly protested calls from cabinet ministers to evacuate 450 Jewish settlers out of the town of 110,000 after a settler massacred dozens of Palestinian worshippers in a mosque on Feb. 25.

"I told him... that would lead to a split that would be impossible to bridge," Rafael Eitan, the leader of the right-wing Tsomet Party said.

Mr. Eitan, Mr. Netanyahu and other opposition leaders addressed a rally of 10,000 supporters in the Kiryat Arba settlement, next to Hebron on Thursday, promising to lead passive resistance to any evacuation attempts.

Despite Friday's assurances, Mr. Rabin intends on evacuating the settlers from Hebron after Israel withdraws from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho as part of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord, Israel's channel two television reported, citing sources close to the prime minister.

That could happen soon, as Environment Minister Yossi Sarid predicted an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho within weeks.

"The government won't have any choice but to discuss — and soon — the need to redeploy of the Jewish settlement in Hebron," Mr. Sarid told Israel Television.

Mr. Rabin hinted that there were changes afoot in an interview published on Friday in the Davar daily newspaper. "It's quite probable that with the unique circumstances in Hebron... we'll have to find different arrangements," he told the newspaper, which is affiliated with his Labour Party.

The Hebron massacre stalled Israel-PLO talks until this week, when both sides agreed to ask 160 armed observers from Norway, Denmark and Italy to patrol the city.

Israel Television reported that only 60 of the observers would be trained policemen and that 100 would be administrators. The observers will report wrongdoing to a joint Israeli-Palestinian panel.

Foreign ministry director-general Uri Savir told Israel television that all three countries have already agreed to join the force, and that Norway had called a meeting next week in Cairo to discuss the force.

The agreement on Hebron cleared the way to resume talks on the Gaza-Jericho accord.

Mr. Sarid said that signing the agreement transferring powers to a Palestinian self-rule authority in the areas would probably not occur by an April 13 deadline, but soon after, implementation of the agreement would start before signing, he said, and 150 policemen were due to arrive in Gaza by next week.

"The police force will be much larger before the negotiations are complete," Mr. Sarid promised. Israel and the PLO have agreed on an 8,500-strong police force.



Palestinian workers give the last touch to a building in Gaza City that will house the first Palestinian policemen who will enter the occupied Gaza Strip this week (AFP photo)

Lebanese media in uproar over curbs

By Samir F. Ghattas
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — Lebanon's news media, long acknowledged as the freest in the Middle East, are moving on a collision course with the government following an unprecedented news blackout.

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's cabinet met in a three-hour session late Tuesday to discuss a draft bill to organise the broadcast media, which since last Wednesday have been forbidden to air news programmes and political commentaries amid a security crackdown against right-wing Christians.

The half-Christian, half-Muslim cabinet entrusted four of its members with preparing a final draft to present to parliament for ratification. Information Minister Michel Samaha said afterwards.

He again denied the move amounted to muzzling public freedoms, and asserted that no restriction would be imposed against Beirut's 11 daily newspapers.

"Freedom of expression is sacred as long as it doesn't amount to chaos, threatening national peace after the civil war," Mr. Samaha said. He refused to provide details of the draft bill discussed at the cabinet session.

The government has said the news suspension decision was warranted by a national emergency resulting from a Feb. 27 church bombing that killed 10 worshippers and injured 60.

Mr. Hariri sought to further allay fears that press freedom was in jeopardy, saying: "Freedom is sacred. Lebanon's democratic system is not going to be touched but measures will be taken to curb the chaos of the broadcast media."

The government's assertions, however, have failed to silence accusations that it is using the church bombing as a pretext to crack down on the freedom of the press, which has survived the terror of the 1975-90 civil war.

"Scapegoating the media appears misguided," the New York-based Middle East Watch said in a letter to President Elias Hrawi asking him to rescind the ban.

"We believe that this ban is a serious violation of the universally recognised principle of freedom of expression," said the letter.

The news ban covered more than two dozen privately owned radio and television stations that sprang up without government licenses during the civil war. Only the state-run television and radio stations were exempt.

There have been media accusations that Mr. Hariri, a billionaire who controls state television's public share and has his own Future Television station, was trying to monopolise the broadcast media.

Mr. Hariri dismissed the charges, saying he was abandoning his 46 per cent share in Tele Liban, the state-run television station.

Even those who support the government were critical of its move against the press.

"If a chaotic media is a calamity, then a unitary media is a catastrophe," said Deputy Parliament Speaker Elie Firzi, a vocal supporter of freedom of the press.

Mr. Firzi and representatives of the private broadcast media called Tuesday for a prompt government cancellation of the news ban.

Ghassan Tuani, publisher of Lebanon's prestigious newspaper Al Nahar, wrote that the government measures were reminiscent of "Nazi practices" and those by Hitler's propaganda chief, Joseph Goebbels.

In a front-page commentary, the doyen of the Lebanese press warned of a Lebanese "Goebbels who imagines he is capable of even banning stage plays."

Under Mr. Samaha's restrictions, published by newspapers last week, economic news is banned and only foreign exchange figures can be reported. Sports events should be reported without comment, cultural programmes allowed only if they do not have any political nature.

Political plays are banned from broadcast. Weather and traffic reports are permissible.

About 10,000 people are employed by the television and radio stations. Many face layoffs if the ban continues because of the loss of revenues from prime commercial time during news programmes.

Religious leaders also opposed the ban.

Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, a Shiite spiritual leader, said he fears newspapers could be targeted next "so that Lebanon will become like any other Arab country with no colour, no taste and no smell except for its excellency and its majesty."

Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir, spiritual leader of the one million Maronite Catholics, said he was worried the "temporary measures could become permanent."

"If this happens then Lebanon is finished and it should be written off."

Palestinian artists bound by own demands

GAZA CITY. Occupied Gaza Strip (AP) — For Palestinian artists, it was inevitable that the first movie premiered here in recent memory would deal with Gaza under occupation.

As Israeli jeeps burst across the screen, the audience backed up the soundtrack with the echoing whistles used throughout the occupied territories to warn of soldiers approaching.

Those watching "Curfew," which premiered last winter in the territories and Israel, wanted their art that way — a reflection of reality. But for Palestinian painters, writers and movie makers, realism is becoming an artistic burden.

The artists, ignored unless they pay homage to Palestinian causes, find that occupation themes stifle their work with an unremitting sameness. They are especially eager for peace, hoping it will liberate them from the obligations of political correctness, but fear the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will not let that happen.

"A painting without a reference to Jerusalem, a painting without a Palestinian flag, without any symbol of the cause, would be rejected as not Palestinian art," said painter Fawaz Sarraj. "People want art to reflect their daily lives. Otherwise they don't understand it."

In addition to politics, Muslim artists must deal with religious codes that declare representations of the human figure to be shameful because only God can create man. Sometimes when the two issues seem at odds, politics wins.

Artists in Gaza tell of a religious leader connected to the fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, who visited an exhibition of work by art students. He was especially incensed by sculpted abstract human figures.

After the artist explained that the figures represented youths pelting Israeli soldiers with stones, the cleric gave it his blessing.

"The themes of the struggle have dominated our cultural life for the past 50 years or so, maybe to the point of total preoccupation, to the point of obsession," said Fawaz Sarraj, a psychologist.

"It has stunted creativity and smothered freedom of expression. It has made art culture run in circles. There isn't the courage to challenge the taboos."

The uprising against occupation that began in December 1987 has put especially tight reins on artists. In the beginning, they were among the few able to create symbols that would get past the Israeli authorities. As the uprising continued, a community possessed by solidarity and mourning was in no mood for expressions of personal freedom or any form of joy.

But change may be on the way; Palestinians are beginning to find the old themes dull. Teachers of children's art classes say the youngsters are using more colours, that the sun is getting bigger while the Palestinian flag shrinks.

In "Curfew," director Rashid Masharawi, a Gazan, depicts the deadening effect of having to stay inside day after day with nothing to do. Palestinians enjoy seeing their lives depicted, but find the movie monotonous.

Risky art, especially poetry, does have an audience.

Well-known poet Mahmoud Darwish, who resigned from the PLO Executive Committee to protest the autonomy agreement with Israel, wrote a long work laced with sarcasm about Palestinian leaders handing over their people's birthright to Israel.

"I will give them everything they want or don't want in order to have peace," says the poem, which predicts the jails will fill with opponents of a government run by the PLO.

Palestinians say voices such as Mr. Darwish's are rare because the conditions of occupation deter art. Artists subsist largely on handouts from political parties, which further limits them. Parents want their children to be doctors or engineers, not painters or musicians.

"Only when individual freedom is guaranteed can we expect a real change," Mr. Sarraj said. "It's difficult to imagine that in the PLO school of thinking."

لجنة تنسيق الشراء الموحدة
The Coordinating Committee of the Consolidated Purchasing

مركز صناعة الاسمنت الأردنية
The Jordan Cement Factories Co. Ltd.

شركة مناجم الفوسفات الأردنية
Jordan Phosphate Mines Co. Ltd.

INVITATION TO TENDERS

The Higher Committee of the Consolidated Purchasing in:

Jordan Phosphate Mines Co. Ltd.
The Arab Potash Co. Ltd.
The Jordan Cement Factories Co. Ltd.

Announces the invitation to the following tenders:

1. Tender No. F.P.C. 1/94 for the supply of conveyor rubber belts.
2. Tender No. F.P.C. 2/94 for the supply of general tires & tubes.
3. Tender No. F.P.C. 3/94 for supply of stainless steel and structural carbon steel materials.

Tender documents and conditions can be obtained from the Arab Potash Company Limited offices in Amman/Procurement Department/Purchasing Section, against JD 150,000 non-refundable fees, for each set of tender documents.

The closing date for submission tenders is 12:00 hours local time Saturday May 28, 1994.

The Higher Committee of The Consolidated Purchasing

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Le Monde Est A Vous
19:00 News in French
19:15 Faut Pas Réver
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 You Bet Your Life
21:15 African Nations' Cup match
22:00 News in English
22:20 Second half of the African Nations' Cup Match
23:00 Island Son
00:00 The Upper Hands

PRAYER TIMES

04:59 Fajr
06:16 Sunrise/Duha
12:39 Dhuhr
16:12 Asr
18:58 Maghreb
20:17 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 623666
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561
St. Ephrem Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will rise and winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 7/21
Aqaba 11/28
Deserts 6/22

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Jordan Valley 12 / 2 /
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 16, Aqaba 24 Humidity readings: Amman 51 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Bassim Qaddumi 648633
Dr. Youssef Fujili 756988
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846070
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh 885880
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778536
Al Azzam pharmacy 637653
Nairohah pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637660
Nairohah pharmacy 639672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IBRD:
Dr. Ahmad Qasr
Alquds pharmacy
ZARQA:
Dr. Randa Shahin 995710

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 621228
Blood Bank 771212
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 625800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repair 623101
Aldadi Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Akleh Maternity, J. Amn. 644412/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malik, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664171/4
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mushtak Hospital 667277
The Islamic, Abdal 666127/77
Al-Ahli, Abdal 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajira 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775112/6
Jemy, Malik 891412/5
Qatir, Alia Hospital 662240/30
Amal Hospital 674153
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)863323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)905640
Im. Sana Hospital (09)86732
Al Hikmah Modern Hospital (09)909090
IBRD:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272225
Rou Al Nafes Hospital (02)547100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 06-53200

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (03)5220-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15	Bangkok (RJ)
06:30	Aqaba (RJ)
06:35	Damascus (RJ)
07:00	Beirut (RJ)
07:35	Frankfurt (RJ)
11:59	Vienna (RJ)
12:00	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:00	Madrid (add) (RJ)
13:00	Athens (RJ)
17:00	Cairo (RJ)
21:00	Aqaba (RJ)
21:00	Riyadh (RJ)
21:00	Aqaba (RJ)
22:30	Damascus (RJ)
22:30	New Delhi (RJ)
22:30	Abu Dhabi, Jeddah (RJ)
22:45	Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
23:00	Bangkok (RJ)
23:45	Sanaa (RJ)
07:20	Other Flights (Terminal 2)
14:30	Rome (AZ)
16:00	Doha, Bahrain (GF)
16:00	Moscow (SU)
21:25	Larnaca (CY)
21:25	Cairo (MS)
02:10	Vienna (add) (RJ)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	550 / 650
Banana	680
Banana (Mukammur)	620
Cabbage	250 / 170
Carrot	200 / 120
Cauliflower	100 / 60
Clementine	100 / 60
Cucumbers (large)	150 / 100
Cucumbers (small)	270 / 180
Garlic	280 / 180
Grape Fruit	1000/800
Green beans	280/170
Lemon	480 / 280
Marrow (large)	140 / 80
Marrow (small)	250 / 180
Onion (dry)	420 / 80
Onion (green)	280 / 180
Peanut	750/500
Pepper (hot)	320 / 300
Pepper (sweet)	360 / 360
Potato	350 / 200
Radish	120 / 80
Tomato	380 / 220
Spinach	140 / 70
String beans	580 / 380



MEETING NORDIC OFFICIAL: Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Saturday receives Per Jänbeck, Nordic council of ministers secretary general, to discuss Middle East affairs and Scandinavia's assistance to Jordan. Minister of

State for Foreign Affairs Taha Al Hassan (left) and Jordan National Red Crescent Society President Mohammad Hadid (right) attended the meeting (Petra photo)

Ministry studies prison reform as part of human rights campaign

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Ministry of Justice is studying the amendment of Jordan's present prison regulations as part of a campaign towards enforcing human rights in the country, said Minister Taher Hikmat, Saturday.

"Physical punishment in prisons as still applied in various countries, but we are working on excluding it from our legislation," said Mr. Hikmat, adding that Jordan's prison regulations were adopted from British legislation back in 1952. According to the "outdated" legislation, punishment for crimes varied from physical punishment to imposed starvation, he said.

Mr. Hikmat told the Jordan Times that the proposed amendments have to be consistent with Jordan's commitments and obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), but that the study under way attempts to come up with a satisfactory formula that ensures commitment towards the just treatment of prisoners without undermining the powers of the legislative system.

The campaign aiming at winning public awareness on human rights included contacts between governmental

figures and human rights activists.

An Amnesty International (AI) delegation met with Minister of Interior Salameh Hammud to discuss developing awareness of human rights in Jordan by introducing a related required subject into school and university curricula in the country.

According to a report Thursday in Al Mustaqbal weekly on human rights in Jordan, Mr. Hammud responded enthusiastically to suggestions made by members of Amnesty International and showed willingness to cooperate in holding activities to raise public awareness of human rights issues.

The minister added that some Jordanian universities have already agreed to include subjects on human rights in their curricula.

Singular efforts to raise public awareness of the importance of the issue include the active participation by Lower House Deputy and human rights activist Toujan Faisal who has been participating in debates and lectures in schools.

Ms. Faisal lectured recently at the Jubilee School on democracy in Jordan and urged Jordan's youth to be active participants in decision-making in the country's affairs as a means to

implement "genuine democracy."

Ms. Faisal stressed that Jordan has to benefit from young people's talents and dedication to realise progress, stability, equality and justice in Jordan.

She added that she was "especially" interested in promoting awareness among the young, and that this interest has been translated during her parliamentary election campaign in which she paid special attention to the younger generation in the country.

The deputy also talked about the role of women in Jordan, then to work at changing "the general view" of women's restricted role in society.

"Jordanian women have to respect their own rights and work on amending rules and regulations that deprive them of their human rights," said Ms. Faisal.

Asma Khader, president of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) and a member of Amnesty International, was quoted in the same March 31 Al Mustaqbal report as saying that a Canadian (AI) delegation was willing to provide training to different women's organisations in the area of implementing human rights.

Mother of 14 children killed by brother — CDD

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 37-year-old Jerash woman Saturday was shot and killed by her inebriated brother in Burma, a small town of Jerash, according to Civil Defence Department (CDD) reports.

The woman, identified as Layla M.A., was shot seven times by her brother Nawaf M.A., who surrendered to police shortly after the killing, a CDD official said.

The official said the victim, the mother of 14 children was accused two years ago of adultery, and her husband divorced her.

The woman was acquitted of the adultery charges a year later and was reunited with her husband, the CDD official said.

Later, said the official, the husband again divorced the woman, and she was obliged to live with her brother.

According to the brother's testimony, said the CDD official, the suspect (42) said that someone told him that his sister was seeing a man in Jerash town.

The brother said he went out and got drunk, returned home and shot his sister.

According to the CDD report the woman died instantly of bullet wounds to the chest.

Her body was taken to Jerash Military Hospital and was later transferred to Al Bashir Hospital for an autopsy.

Jerash police declined comment on the crime.

Man defrauded

In Irbid, police are searching for three people who on March 31, took JD19,000 fraudulently from an Irbid citizen and disappeared, a police report said.

The victim, a 41-year-old identified as M.H.Y., told police that he met the three men recently, and they told him that they had 400 pieces of gold worth JD 19,000 for sale.

M.H.Y. said the men showed him samples of the gold claiming it was a small portion of the rest of the cache which was hidden away.

On March 31, the victim said, one of the three men came to his house and asked him for the JD19,000 in return for the gold. The man took the money and never returned.

A Public Security Department (PSD) official told the Jordan Times that the suspects were still at large, but police have good descriptions of them.

The official called on citizens to take extra precautions when buying or selling gold.

"There are similar fraud cases reported daily, and people who are interested in buying or selling gold must do so through licensed jewellery shops," the official said.

He said this is the only legal way to trade in gold, because jewellery shops request a receipt for the merchandise they buy from customers and these shops are the only places that can determine the real value of the gold.

Scholars to review status of Jerusalem

AMMAN (J.T.) — Scholars representing Arab and Islamic countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and America will gather in Amman Monday for a three-day conference to discuss the status of Jerusalem and the threats to it by world Zionism, according to Izzat Jaradat, the secretary general of the General Islamic Congress for Jerusalem (GICJ).

The meeting, he said, coincides with the dangerous developments in the occupied city where the Israeli authorities continue their drive to Judaize the city and evict its Arab and Islamic civilian population.

Dr. Jaradat, who is rapporteur of the coming conference, said the delegates attending the meeting will include Muslim and Christian scholars from the Arab and Islamic nations who will review research papers on Jerusalem and discuss Arab and Islamic positions and

means of defending Islamic as well as Christian holy places.

According to Dr. Jaradat, the meeting will focus on four points: studies on the city's importance in the international dimension; ways for highlighting the Arab and Islamic role in confronting Zionist practices; ways to rally Islamic as well as Christian support for the Arab nation's defence of the city; and ways to internationally resist Israel's ongoing process of Judaizing Jerusalem and building Jewish settlements in and around the city.

"We want to raise world public attention of the need to defend religious rights and holy places in Jerusalem and expose Israel's aggressive and illegal operations in the city," said Dr. Jaradat.

Islamic and Christian delegates attending the conference will come from Senegal, Indonesia, Turkey, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Dead Sea area surveys reveal no commercial oil deposits — NRA

AMMAN (Petra) — The Natural Resources Authority's (NRA) recent seismological surveys near the Dead Sea revealed no commercial deposits, according to Fakhri Daghestani, NRA director general.

The NRA's surveys were conducted within the region that was granted as a concession to the Arab Potash Company APC, while AMOCO (American Oil Company) carried out another survey in the south Dead Sea region, said Mr. Daghestani.

AMOCO has had a lease since 1984 to conduct oil exploration in the Kingdom on the basis of production-sharing, he noted.

In addition, the NRA recently conducted surveys in the Lisan zone of the Dead Sea and drilled several wells in Ain Al Hamra on the Dead Sea shores in a search for petroleum, according to Mr. Daghestani.

He said the NRA is focusing on the Dead Sea shores because samples found so far have proved to be suitable for commercial use, and it is hoped that NRA teams would finally strike oil there, he added.

Mr. Daghestani said the NRA has designed an integrated programme of exploration surveys in the Dead Sea region in the coming year and is in the process of conducting studies on the northern regions of Wadi Araba zone for future seismological surveys.

So far the NRA has drilled 75 wells around the Kingdom, and oil firms operating in Jordan have dug 25 others, but no commercial quantities have been discovered yet, said Mr. Daghestani.

He said the NRA was encouraging foreign oil firms to invest in exploration programmes, adding that it is hoped that the National Jordanian Oil Company (NJOC), which is being formed, will handle part of the task.

Referring to recent reports

saying that the Dead Sea sits on the largest oil lake in the world, Dr. Daghestani said the NRA hopes this is true, but so far we have no indication to substantiate these reports.

All the studies and surveys conducted by the oil firms and the NRA have proved that the Dead Sea has no oil deposits in commercial amounts, he said.

Referring to NRA's programmes for the next two years, Mr. Daghestani said that the authority will direct its attention to the Rishah fields near the Iraqi border in order to locate more natural gas that can be used to generate electric power.

At present, he said, the gas extracted from Rishah fields is used to produce 20 per cent of the total electric power in Jordan.

He said he hoped that the two-year programme in Rishah would yield energy sources to raise to 35 per cent the rate of electric power produced by gas turbines.

Business group urges Turkey to buy more Jordanian goods

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA) Saturday urged Turkey to buy more Jordanian products and help adjust the balance of trade which is currently in favour of Turkey.

Last year Jordan imported nearly JD47 million worth of Turkish goods and exported only JD15 million of Jordanian national products to Turkish markets, said Hamdi Tabbaa, the JBA vice-chairman.

Speaking to the Jordan Times after signing an agreement for the establishment of a Jordanian-Turkish business council, Mr. Tabbaa said the

two-member Turkish team led by Sharif Akram Güvendiren informed him that Turkey was embarking on a wide-scale agrarian reform programme requiring greater amounts of phosphate and potash-based fertilisers which can be bought from Jordan.

Jordan currently sells fertilisers to Turkey, but the Kingdom wants to increase those sales as well as sell its northern neighbour other products, Mr. Tabbaa said.

In September, the new council will meet in Istanbul when the JBA will urge the Turks to promote trade tourism and cultural exchanges with Jordan, according to Mr. Tabbaa. He said the council, which

groups representatives of Jordanian and Turkish business groups, will be meeting annually to examine achievements, chart future plans and deal with problems impeding trade.

Through the joint council, said Mr. Tabbaa, he hoped a trade centre in Istanbul would be operated to facilitate trade.

He added Jordan hopes to take part in the Izmir International Fair to help market its industrial products.

For his part, Mr. Güvendiren said that Jordan can adjust the balance of trade with Turkey by selling its diverse products, instead of restricting its exports to fertilisers.

Aqaba mayor complains of lingering pollution

AQABA (J.T.) — Aqaba city is threatened by two major environmental hazards, phosphate dust and the stench from the waste water treatment plant, complained Aqaba Mayor Ibrahim Abul 'Izz Saturday.

Despite the recent installation of anti-dust devices at the phosphate terminal in Aqaba port, dust continues to fall periodically, causing a major environmental problem for the inhabitants and the port area, Mr. Abul 'Izz told the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The waste water treatment plant is six kilometres away from the sea and located north of the city, but its foul odours permeate the atmosphere, and the municipality incurs a heavy cost of trying to improve the

situation by spending JD30,000 annually on certain types of sprays to cleanse the atmosphere, said the mayor.

He demanded that major firms and organisations in Aqaba, like the Aqaba Ports Corporation, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company, the Arab Potash Company and the Jordan Fertiliser Company make ample donations to the municipality to enable it to carry out its tasks and serve the estimated 63,000 residents of the resort city area.

Mr. Abul 'Izz also demanded that the firms and organisations help the municipality establish a university in the Aqaba region as well as construct a large hospital.

He said that the city is currently served by a small milit-

ary hospital built in 1977, which can no longer meet the growing health care needs of the rising local population.

Referring to future programmes, the mayor said the municipal council has now decided to build a large shopping centre in 1994 to earn income that would help finance services.

The mayor said the Aqaba municipality was working diligently to ensure its solvency and that the JD1.25 million budget would be sufficient to conduct municipal projects and services.

Meanwhile, a local firm set up to package rice that arrives in bulk at the port Saturday reported severe losses, which it attributed to the continuing siege on the port city.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Basma visits namesake battalion

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday attended a celebration organised by Princess Basma Battalion to mark its 3rd anniversary. Princess Basma delivered an address in which she expressed her delight at having the chance to meet with the armed forces personnel. She also lauded the good reputation the Jordanian Armed Forces enjoy at the Arab and international levels, pointing that their high standards prompted the U.N. to seek the help of Jordanian forces in peace keeping efforts in various parts of the world. The battalion's commander delivered an address welcoming Princess Basma. He said it was an honour for the battalion to be named after her and that it

was a source of pride for its personnel to serve the higher interests of the homeland as well as the goals of the Great Arab Revolt.

Minister announces tourism strategy study

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan said the ministry has prepared a detailed study on a new strategy to promote internal and external tourism in Jordan. He added that the government will implement an integrated plan to create a tourism network linking Amman, Madaba, the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley. The minister said that when the network is established, the ministry will market it internally and externally as a package, sharing historical, archaeological, cultural and touristic characteristics.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EUROPEAN FILM FESTIVAL

- ★ British film entitled "Howard's End" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.
- ★ Netherlands film entitled "Above The Mountains" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition by artist Perween Al Sarraf at Aba'ad Art Gallery (10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 819861).
- ★ Exhibition by Iraqi artists Hayfa Habeeb and Farouk Hassan at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ One-day exhibition entitled "Graphics" by artist Burhan Mohammad at Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Return to Nature" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ The Amman-Baghdad exhibition" by artist Ahmad Al Shalkhali at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Ceramics exhibition by artist Isam Nseirat at the Royal Cultural Centre.

- ★ Exhibition of Jordanian herbs at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Flower exhibition entitled "The Flower Bridge Between Jordan and Palestine" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Aman (10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.) (Tel. 679166).
- ★ Computer exhibition at the Amman International Auto Exhibition.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Ahmed Nawar at Balka' Art Gallery in Fuhels (daily from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 720902).

FILM

- ★ Film entitled "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" at the American Centre at 5:00 p.m. (110 minutes).

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture entitled "Arabs and Secularism" by Dr. Mohammad Al Adhmesh at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

CONDOLENCES

American recipients of 1993-94 J.W. Fulbright/Hays Awards feel deep sorrow over the death of Jumana Jubran Esau
Who was a good friend and helpful colleague. May she enjoy eternal happiness.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

ONCE UPON A TIME THERE
WAS A MAN WHO CAME FROM
ITALY — MARCO POLO
WAS HIS NAME, HE SAILED — AND
SAILED TO THE END OF THE WORLD,
UNTIL HE REACHED A PLACE CALLED
CHINA — HE LIKED IT THERE,
AND FOUND IT RARE, THAT PEOPLE DID
WHAT OTHERS DIDN'T DARE. IN STICKS
THEY ATE — LONG THINGS THIN
AS HAIR, "OOOH HE THOUGHT, I MUST
TAKE THIS BACK HOME, TO SHOW TO

THE PEOPLE IN ROME — SO HE
HEADED WEST, AND IN JORDAN
TOOK A REST, WHERE PEOPLE DESERVED
THE BEST. ANGELO — HE MET, IN HIS
VILLA — HE SLEPT, ALL HIS
JOURNEY SECRETS HE CONFESSED,
ANGELO WAS IMPRESSED.
SPAGHETTI — IT WAS NAMED,
AND IN ROME IT WAS FAMED,
BUT WITH ANGELO THE SECRET
RECIPE REMAINED...



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Jordan Times

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Pressure with no name

THERE IS no doubt that Jordan is being subjected to tremendous pressures from regional and big powers to fall into line with new arrangements in the Middle East, especially a full peace based on the dictates of Israel. That pressure is being manifested in many ways. In one, Israel wants Jordan to sign a peace treaty without settling the thorny issues of land, water and refugees. Unless our borders with Israel and Palestine are demarcated and fixed there cannot be progress; and unless the issues of water and refugees are solved to the satisfaction of all parties no peace treaty can stand the test of time. Palestinian refugees in Jordan, who number no less than 30 per cent of the population, will turn into a destabilising factor to the country's security unless and until their plight is solved once and for all.

As far as water is concerned, Jordan's population, which is growing at about three per cent annually, is already running short of it but due mainly to the uneven sharing of the water resources with Israel.

In another way, the U.S., which seems to be all the time going along with whatever policies Israel advocates, is putting pressure on Jordan on at least two fronts. The first is the naval blockade against Aqaba, and the second is in the realm of Jordan-Arab relations. On the first count, Jordan can only see the blockade as a punishment for Jordan's position during the Gulf crisis. Since only Aqaba-bound traffic in the whole of the Near East and the East Mediterranean region is being checked, the U.S. cannot continue to claim that it is merely enforcing the regime of sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council against Iraq. Jordan is right to ask whether the same is being applied to goods destined to Iraq through Syria, Turkey or Iran. The blockade against Aqaba can only be interpreted as a cruel tool of pressure on Jordan mandated by Israel and implemented, with arrogance, by the U.S. and its erstwhile allies in the Gulf war.

On the Arab front, Jordan cannot understand why it is being boycotted by other Arab states in the region, especially Saudi Arabia. Jordan has proven it had nothing to do with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Its position on foreign intervention in the crisis has been vindicated. Some Arab members of the 30-nation U.S.-led coalition that fought against Iraq are admitting that the whole treatment of the conflict was a sham. Perhaps because the Saudi leadership knows very well that the Saudi people themselves were against foreign intervention, King Fahd has decided not to "forgive" Jordan for pointing to that since the very beginning of the crisis.

The prime minister, Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, said recently that the West was not contributing as much as it could to Jordan's attempts to mend fences with the Saudis.

Well, if the U.S. truly cannot help that cause, Washington can at least show goodwill by lifting the Aqaba siege right away. Good intentions by the Americans, translated into a practical gesture this time, will not only help boost U.S. standing among Jordanians. It will also serve America's best interests in the region.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday said that the United States has failed to impose its will on North Korea because of the firm stand of the Korean leaders who reject any external hegemony. The South Koreans have also refused to play into the hands of the United States and impose a blockade on their northern neighbour, said Tareq Masarweh. This ought to give a good lesson to the Arab countries which still impose sanctions on Iraq and help the United States maintain a blockade on Aqaba. Libya and Sudan, he said, The South Koreans refused to cause harm to their kinsmen in the north and fall into the American trap while the Arabs continue to serve U.S. interest by maintaining their siege on the Iraqi people, added the writer. The South Koreans have played a significant role in backing their brothers in the North and thus foiled the American plot while the Arabs in our region are still helping the Americans against their Iraqi brothers and sisters, he added. At the same time, said the writer, South Korea saved itself from any confrontation with the North and saved its funds, which the Americans had wanted spent on purchasing American weapons.

IT IS not enough for the Secretary of the U.N. Sanctions Committee to laud Jordan's position and policies in the Middle East and to decry the siege on Aqaba because such stand cannot solve the problem for the Kingdom, said Al Dustour daily Saturday. These statements merely recognise the hardships encountered by Jordan and the harm done to its national economy, but do not end the U.S.-led siege on the country's port, added the paper. The nice words of solidarity said the daily should be followed by action that would show real respect for the Kingdom's sovereignty and end the pressure on its people and leadership, said the paper. The paper said that as the country continues to work for genuine peace and as it has proved to be abiding by the U.N.-imposed sanctions on Iraq, it hopes to see an end to the siege that encroaches on its sovereignty and harms its economy. It said that Jordan can only be part of the peace, process if its rights are respected and its national interests safeguarded.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Agriculture — from provider to dependent

AGRICULTURE IS one of the oldest productive activities in the world, if not the oldest. It maintained its position as an absolute necessity, that modern and backward societies alike cannot live without, even through its relative importance in the composition of the gross domestic product (GDP) of all countries declined, following the emergence of other productive sectors, such as industry and services. These two relatively new productive sectors did not replace agriculture as a food provider. They only improved its efficiency and enhanced its productivity. Thanks to industry and services, feeding a people no longer requires more than a small percentage of its labour force to be devoted to agriculture.

At one time, agriculture in Jordan was crucial in a society of primitive self-sufficiency. The standard of living of the population depended largely on the rainfall and its distribution. Famine during bad seasons was not unusual. Trade and business prospered in good years. At that time, agriculture used to engage around half of the entire labour force. It accommodated most of the population, albeit at subsistence level.

Although the contribution of agriculture to Jordan's GDP declined from 25 per cent in the early sixties to 7 per cent in the early nineties, the volume and value of the agricultural output increased, despite the substantial reduction in the areas available for agriculture. Seven per cent of the GDP in 1993 is much bigger than 25 per cent of the GDP in 1963.

What I am after, at this juncture, is to argue that the official agricultural policy, which claims to be supportive to farmers, has in fact suppressed agriculture and, to a large extent, converted it from a productive sector on which people depend for their living to a kind of economic parasite which depends on subsidies. Agriculture, which used to contribute to the national economy, became a burden on the economy.

Those official agricultural policies are represented by providing the farmers with agricultural inputs at less than the economic cost, including irrigation water, seeds, fertilisers, cheap financing and repeated calls for writing off interest if not the original principal of debt which killed the Jordan Coopera-

"All that is required from the government is a policy of hands-off regarding agriculture, and leaving agricultural units and cooperative institutions to operate freely in the market..."

tive Organisation (JCO), crippled the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) and prevented recycling of funds. Official agricultural policy can also be seen in the form of buying crops and surpluses of products from farmers at prices higher than the market and underwriting the losses of bad weather as a government responsibility. In effect, agriculture became a feeble creature which cannot stand on its own, or walk on its feet. It has to be carried all the time on the back of the government.

When the central government of Lebanon collapsed and all but disappeared during the 15 odd years of civil strife, all the sectors of the Lebanese economy suffered and declined considerably, except agriculture, which grew and prospered, and was able not only to feed the Lebanese people, but also to export huge amounts of fruits and vegetables, something Lebanon never experienced before.

The lesson is obvious: a government is essential for everything except agriculture. All that is required from the government is a policy of hands-off regarding agriculture, and leaving agricultural units and cooperative institutions to operate freely in the market and adjust their behaviour in accordance with the signals of the market, instead of the directives of the ministry, the Cooperative Organisation, the Jordan Valley Authority, or other heavy-handed governmental departments.

Agriculture is better off without an official agricultural policy or governmental subsidies, which crippled this vital sector and almost made agriculture an economic liability on the state and the economy.

M. KAHIL



Rebuilding the empire

As Russia gets the job of peacekeeping in the 'near abroad', the U.S. tries to keep Moscow's influence in check

By Andrew Katell
The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The Kremlin, feeling its security threatened, sends its army into three countries.

Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Afghanistan in 1979.

No. Tajikistan, Moldova and Georgia, all in 1994.

Russia is staking out its "near abroad" — the rest of the former Soviet Union — as vital to its security, and in the process has created a quandary for the Clinton administration: how to respect Russia's legitimate interests and support President Boris Yeltsin while respecting the independence of other former Soviet republics and their attempts to escape Moscow's control.

Caught in the middle is the United Nations, which is short of soldiers to keep the peace in various hotspots and wants regional organisations to bear more of the load.

It may be only a matter of time before Russian soldiers are wearing blue U.N. peacekeepers' helmets in the "near abroad." In former Yugoslavia, about 1,200 already are becoming comfortable in U.N. blue.

But Russian forces in other former Soviet republics have been accused of taking sides in ethnic and territorial conflicts. President Bill Clinton and other Western leaders worry that, feeling the pressure of ultranationalists, Moscow may be trying to rebuild the Russian empire, claiming special rights in its region as the United States did with the Monroe Doctrine.

To allay the fears, Russian politicians and diplomats take great pains to depict their country as a responsible world citizen.

Reviewing ethnic conflicts among Russia's neighbours, Foreign Minister Andrei

Kozyrev told the U.N. General Assembly in September: "These problems are too serious and tragic to speculate about 'neo-imperial' plans of Russia, diplomatic 'rivalry' or the search for new spheres of influence."

With instability at Russia's doorstep, he said on another occasion, "we cannot afford to do nothing."

Russian diplomats at the United Nations say the West's fears are largely "old thinking" left over from the Soviet years.

They contend that Russian troops go only where and when invited, respect the sovereignty of host countries and direct military operations towards achieving political settlements.

"Russian intervention has shown (Moscow) is not capable of being a neutral force in the region... Its goal is more to further its own interests rather than to bring about resolutions to the conflict (in the former Soviet republics)," a Harvard researcher.

Russia has legitimate security interests in the "near abroad," they say, such as protecting the 25 million Russians living there, preventing wars from spilling into Russia and stemming the drug traffic.

A more subtle motive may be to give the now-impooverished Russian military, humiliated by withdrawals from Eastern Europe and the Baltics, something to do.

While other countries recognise some of its goals as legitimate, Russia also is getting the job of peacekeeping in such places as Tajikistan, Moldova and Georgia by default. No one else wants the job.

Other countries have difficulty supplying enough troops

to maintain the 16 U.N. peacekeeping missions now in operation. They also have been reluctant to concede that the ethnic and territorial conflicts plaguing the former Soviet Union threaten international peace and security, a prerequisite for sending U.N. peacekeepers.

In early March, the United States supported Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze's request to the Security Council for U.N. peacekeepers in the separatist Abkhazia region.

To keep Russia's influence in check, Mr. Clinton insisted that the U.N. force be multinational. The United States also said it would withdraw its support unless progress was made

proud of what we are doing in the near abroad?" a senior Russian diplomat said, on condition of anonymity.

Ed Luck, president of the U.N. Association of the United States, said the Russians want the "good housekeeping seal of approval" so they can display a "sense of still being a great power" without having their motives questioned.

Fiona Hill, a Harvard specialist on ethnic conflict in the former Soviet Union, said Russia may have trouble meeting U.N. standards of strict impartiality in peacekeeping.

"Russian intervention has shown it's not capable of being a neutral force in the region," she said. "Its goal is more to further its own interests rather than bring about resolution to the conflict."

Ms. Hill cited Russia's support of Georgian forces in Abkhazia, of Russian separatists in Moldova and of the Tajik government against pro-Islamic forces and insurgents from Afghanistan.

Even the most common Russian term for what the Kremlin is doing in the "near abroad" — *Mirovorcheskaya Missiya* — is best translated as "peace-making mission," not peacekeeping. That is an important distinction in U.N. diplomacy because it implies the use of force, not merely the passive monitoring of a ceasefire.

The Russian diplomat countered that the peacekeepers are separate from regular Russian troops stationed in those countries.

He acknowledged, however, that they have more robust rules of engagement than U.N. peacekeepers. The diplomat noted, for example, that "peace enforcement units" in Georgia's South Ossetia, where residents are trying to unite with Ossetians in Russia, were authorised to shoot ceasefire violators.

ANC unsure of moral high ground

By Anton Ferreira
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — As the African National Congress (ANC) gets nearer to the responsibilities of power, its stand on South Africa's moral high ground has come under closer scrutiny.

ANC leader Nelson Mandela's 27 years in jail gave him a virtually untouchable aura as the country's leading statesman.

But he has faced uncharacteristically tough questioning over his endorsement of a state of emergency proclaimed on Thursday in blood-soaked Natal and KwaZulu, where political violence is threatening to disrupt this month's all-race election.

The east coast province and the Zulu territory within it are the home ground of Mr. Mandela's main black opponents, who are promoting a boycott of the vote expected to make him South Africa's first black president.

The state of emergency reduces the legal rights of suspects and increases the powers of police and troops.

It is the first time Mr. Mandela and his African National Congress have thrown their weight behind the sort of strong-arm law enforcement used against them for decades by the apartheid state.

The emergency measure was endorsed in advance by all parties, including the ANC, on South Africa's transitional executive council — the weightiest decision the council has taken.

At a news conference on Thursday, Mr. Mandela was asked if it was a precedent for the way a future ANC government would treat political opponents.

Mr. Mandela snapped back that he did not have time to deal with "esoteric" questions because he was engaged in concrete efforts to bring peace.

He was similarly abrupt when asked about his refusal to allow police into ANC headquarters to investigate the killing of eight demonstrators by ANC security guards.

Asked if his law and order minister would allow political opponents to set conditions for police probes into criminal activity, he said:

"Let's face it when we are the government, I am entitled to negotiate with law and order officials."

The police attempt to enter the ANC headquarters, known

as Shell House, arose from a march through central Johannesburg on Monday by the mainly Zulu Inkatha Freedom Party.

ANC guards at shell house opened fire to block what they said was an attempt to storm the building.

Mr. Mandela said a police general had asked if his men could conduct ballistics tests at Shell House but he had replied they could do so only after they had acted against Inkatha. The general had agreed, Mr. Mandela said.

The ANC, after 80 years of opposition, is expected to win South Africa's first all-race elections at the end of the month with up to two-thirds of the vote.

Mr. Mandela said the use of emergency, a measure often used by apartheid governments of the past, was intended only to ensure that the poll would be held amid "relative peace" in Natal, scene of some of the worst ANC-Inkatha fighting.

Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who is chief minister of KwaZulu, and his followers are boycotting the polls, insisting on guarantees for greater self-determination in a new South Africa.

Authorities fear attempts to impede free campaigning and voting in Natal-KwaZulu.

The Human Rights Commission (HRC), some of whose senior members also belong to the ANC, was among critics of the decision to impose an emergency.

"It immediately means people's rights are going to be denied," an HRC spokesman said.

The ANC has also been criticised for including in its list of election candidates people like Mr. Mandela's estranged wife Winnie, who has been convicted of kidnapping, and leaders of Allied Black Homelands accused of corruption.

"South African political commentators have a tradition of being too kind to the politicians and tend to report at face value their rhetoric and promises," said political scientist Robert Schrire of the University of Cape Town, criticising all of the country's leading parties including the ruling National Party.

"The ANC has not allowed principles to stand in the way of power. How else can one explain the decision to cooperate with some of the most autocratic potentates from the collapsing Bantustan (homeland) system."

LETTERS

Right step towards human rights

To the Editor:

In a publication released last week, Amnesty International expressed concern about the deportation from Jordan, during the course of 1993, of some refugees said to have been forcibly returned to their country of origin. Amnesty International indicates that such measures are in contradiction with the spirit of the Jordanian Constitution which provides that persons seeking asylum for political reasons should not be expelled.

While this is certainly correct, one may also underpin this recognised principle of non refoulement (no forcible return). This principle provides that none should be forced to return to a country in which his life or freedom would be endangered because of "race, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion."

This principle which is the core of asylum and of refugee international law, finds its roots in several international instruments and declarations, such as the 1951 convention relating to the status of refugee (Art. 33) the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa (Art. 11), the Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Art. 3), as well as in the Declaration on Territorial Asylum (Art. 3).

The principle is now considered as part of the customary international law, binding all states, be they party or not to the instruments mentioned above. In fact, denying its value would mean denying to those invoking it for valid reason the enjoyment of fundamental human rights, including the right to life, to freedom from torture and to liberty and security of person. Indeed, returning them to the country or territory from where they have fled would mean openly exposing them to the violation of their fundamental human rights.

Jordan has ratified the Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and is presently considering the possibility of acceding to the 1951 convention relating to refugee status that 120 states have already ratified.

Given the generally positive attitude demonstrated by Jordan towards refugees and asylum seekers of all origins, step. It could even be considered as a formality since, as contained in this instrument, it would however have the advantage of underlining the purely humanitarian nature of the granting of asylum. It would also ensure that tragic mistakes such as those reported by Amnesty International are not repeated.

Samer Haddadin (advocate),
Amman.

welcomes letters and contributions from its readers. Letters should be sent to the editor, preferably by post, and should contain the writer's full name and address. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

NHF helps women help themselves

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Almost a decade after it was established in 1985, Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) has developed into a national institution whose development projects have reached all regions of the Kingdom.

With a development philosophy that emphasises long-term, integrated grassroots development, NHF has brought to many an underprivileged member of society more than the traditional one time aid that addresses an urgent need at a given time.

The foundation's objective has been to provide these people with a stable income through equipping them with the necessary skills to take up a profession or financing small-scale economic schemes that tap the local resources of communities.

Through the Quality of Life Project that was launched in 1989, the foundation has aimed at training and supporting people to become self-reliant by promoting labour-intensive projects. The project contributes towards attaining NHF's main objective of developing effective systems for integrating the needy of the country into the socio-economic development process.

About 25,000 people have

already benefited, directly and indirectly, from the project's schemes, which include home gardens, fruit orchards, goat and cow raising, fish ponds, tractor knitting and sewing. Women clubs are also established to encourage, train and support women to become more involved in planning and evaluating their own development efforts. Grassroot development councils are set up and communities are divided into clusters to identify development needs and institutionalise democratic participation in decision-making.

With rural women as its major target, the Women in Development Programme launches and institutionalises unconventional income-generating schemes based on the concepts of self-employment and education. The programme endows women with the skill to become active participants in their own development and trained income earners in their societies. Over 500 women and their families have already found in the unconventional productive schemes of the programme a means of alleviating their economic and social conditions. These schemes include medicinal herbs, beekeeping and rabbit raising, among others.

Like the Quality of Life Project, the programme has focused on development schemes

that can be locally maintained and developed while corresponding to the social and traditional environment of the women who benefit from them.

While helping to revive national handicrafts and preserve a unique aspect of Jordan's national heritage, the National Handicrafts Development Project has become a success story in both economic and artistic achievements.

The hand-woven rugs produced by Jordanian women in remote villages of the Kingdom have impressed international festivals in the United States and Europe. These rugs have won praise in international exhibitions and are in demand by the most sophisticated rug customers and collectors in the world.

On the economic level, the project provided a stable income for women who did not have to alter their style of living to be able to benefit from it. NHF gives women the choice between working at their homes or at centres which it set up in their villages.

As women weave the rugs in accordance with styles and techniques developed by their ancestors, the Jordan Design and Trade Centre adopts modern marketing techniques to promote their products. It also trains them on new designs that suit modern taste and

meet internationally required qualities. Through this combination of traditional skills and modern promotion techniques, the project has established itself as one of the leading national handicrafts development initiatives in the whole region.

So has NHF been recognised as a leading community development institution in the Middle East. Its sustainable grassroots development projects have become models followed by other countries in the region; its senior staff are constantly called upon by development organisations in other countries in the region to offer their technical skills and expertise and help these countries initiate projects similar to the ones launched by NHF.

By identifying the different development needs of the Kingdom, NHF has been able to introduce innovative and dynamic integrated community development models whose successes are testified to by the thousands of beneficiaries whose whole lives have changed since they became involved with NHF. Most families and women had a zero-income before joining NHF; each of them now earns JD100-125 monthly. A number of them have become successful businesswomen, earning about JD500 a month.

Hard times, poor care blamed for 'birth crisis'

By Julia Rubin
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — Galina Monasheva has brought thousands of babies into the world in her 20 years at birth house No. 32, in one of Moscow's oldest neighbourhoods.

But the newborns she's delivering these days are the weakest and sickest ever. So are their mothers.

"The level of general health is noticeably worse," says Ms. Monasheva, who patrols the chilly ward in a white coat and cap. Bored young women in bathrobes lean against the walls, waiting. Cats wander the hallways in search of mice.

"The women come in with various diseases and with bad diets," says Ms. Monasheva. "We have more babies born anemic and underweight, and more birth defects."

Statistics nationwide back her up, showing a rising number of infant illnesses and birth defects, such as cleft palates and cerebral palsy. Infant mortality rose 10 per cent in the first two-thirds of 1993 compared to all of 1992. The birth rate fell 14 per cent for the year.

"Russia stands on the edge of an abyss," Deputy Minister of Public Health Nikolai Vaganov said recently. "For the first time in its centuries-old history, there is a danger of the nation's physical degeneration, of irreparable damage to its genetic fund."

Health officials blame inadequate health care, widespread environmental contamination, rising alcoholism among women and the poor diets and general stress that accompany declining living standards.

"If it goes on like this, we'll lose our children," said Yevgeny Lihvin, a geneticist who heads Russia's centre for Rehabilitation of Congenital Pathology.

Other health indicators reinforce the grim picture. Life expectancy for Russian men plummeted last year from 62 to 59 years, 13 years less than for American men.



A nurse at a Moscow hospital holds a newborn (File photo)

Russian women's life expectancy also fell, from 73.8 years to 73.2.

The perception that Russia is being physically weakened and depopulated had been seized on by nationalists, who blame an onslaught of Western decadence, defined as anything from stock markets to rock music.

Lawmaker Yuri Vlasov, for instance, recently argued that individualism, which he equated with greed and selfishness, was an American import "organically alien to Russia" and destroying Russia's spiritual health.

Many of the health problems are legacies of the Soviet regime. But the economic turmoil and social stress brought on by the collapse of Communism have only aggravated the health woes.

At her birth house, Ms. Monasheva will not give figures for birth defects except to say there are now "several dozens" a year at birth. With 1,350 babies born there last year, that implies an ex-

tremely high rate.

Government figures show the number of babies with obvious deformities rose six per cent nationwide in the first eight months of 1993 compared with all of 1992.

The picture is particularly grim in the former Soviet republics.

In Ukraine, doctors report an epidemic of child cancers, deformities and underweight births eight years after the Chernobyl nuclear accident. Experts say it is hard to know how much to blame on Chernobyl and how much on other ecological contamination and on Ukraine's sharply worsened living standards.

Murray Feshbach, a Georgetown University demographer, believes Russians' health has been so severely undermined that the gene pool is being damaged, leading to more deformities and inherited diseases.

"The problem appears to be beyond environmental...I think it's genetic," Mr. Feshbach said.

Many geneticists are sceptical, saying it would take generations to change a nation's genes, and even then it would be difficult to pinpoint what caused it.

"I don't think you could ever prove a connection between environmental causes and genetic changes in a population as large and varied as Russia's," said Yevgeny Ginter of Russia's Institute on Human Genetics, who is researching the effects of the Chernobyl disaster.

Irina Manuilova, who heads a Moscow family planning clinic, said the biggest threats to women's health continue to be poor diet, stress and a reliance on abortion for birth control.

At the same time that more babies are dying, fewer are being born.

"We've lost our confidence. We don't know what anything will be like tomorrow, and people don't want children when they're under that kind of stress," said Ms. Manuilova.

Asia population growth overtaking rice output

By Mahabub Hossain

MANILA — The race to avoid a collision between population growth and rice production in Asia goes on, amid worrying signs that gains of the recent past may be lost over the next few decades.

In the past quarter-century, populations of countries where rice is a staple food grain have increased by an average of 70 per cent, but this increase was matched by higher yields, thanks to the spread of new rice technology. Global rice production doubled, world rice prices fell by more than 40 per cent and per capita rice consumption rose by an average of 25 per cent.

But while the populations of major rice-consuming nations continue to swell, growth in rice production has slowed dramatically in the 10 countries that account for 85 per cent of global output. If these trends continue, demand for rice in many parts of Asia will outstrip supply within a few years. Changes in diets in some industrialising nations, where people are eating less rice, will not alter this trend.

Alleviation of poverty is an additional force behind the rising demand for rice. Millions of Asians and Africans still have rice only once a day, if at all. The need for rice will be an estimated 70 per cent higher in 2025 than it is today. Yields must more than double just to maintain current consumption levels. They must increase still more if malnutrition and poverty in Africa and South Asia are to be overcome.

Yet complacency seems to be growing. In some places, attention is shifting from raising productivity to protecting natural resources. Donor agencies are allocating more of their limited research funds to projects that aim to conserve the natural resource base. Less money is directed to projects designed to raise food production. Both are needed, in a mutually supporting framework.

Policymakers in less developed countries are also shifting emphasis. Many governments are withdrawing subsidies from fertilisers and other agricultural supplies. They are reducing investments in water-research and development and agricultural research and extension. They are adopting programmes that promote crop diversification at the expense of food production. Financing to develop and maintain the irrigation and drainage systems that helped spread modern strains of rice in the 1960s and 1970s has fallen dramatically.

Declining real prices on the world market have added to the complacency about rice production. But world trade involves a mere 4 per cent of global output. International price trends do not reflect the shaky balance between overall supply and demand. For example, China and India consume 55 per cent of world rice supplies. If a series of natural disasters forced either country to import just a small fraction of national demand, international rice prices would rise substantially.

Growth in rice output in the last 30 years has been achieved primarily by increasing yield. But yield gains appear to be flattening. Reversing that trend will not be easy.

The equation is complicated by a reduction in the area of rice cultivation. Prime rice land is being lost to industrialisation and urbanisation in the faster-growing Asian countries. In the 1980s, the harvested area of rice declined in China, Japan, Burma and the Philippines.

If environmental concerns result in policies that remove marginal lands from rice production and hasten the shift from intensive to less intensive cropping systems, the area under rice cultivation will decline even faster. This will intensify pressure to raise yields to meet the anticipated increase in demand.

Irrigated rice accounts for almost 75 per cent of the total. Most farmers plant high-yielding modern varieties, and output is approaching the ceiling attainable through modern scientific techniques. For the last three decades, yields in Japan and South Korea have fluctuated between 6 and 6.5 tonnes per hectare (2.5 acres). Yields in China, on the main Indonesian island of Java and in Punjab and Tamil Nadu in India will soon reach that level.

In the tropics, the gap between yields and experimental yield potential is still large because of such natural forces as floods, droughts, heavy rainfall and salinity.

Most of the increase in rice yields in the favourable en-

vironments of the last 25 years was achieved by planting genetically improved varieties designed to respond well to chemical fertiliser and agrochemicals. What is needed is a new generation plant type as well as cropping technology that relies less on inputs from off the farm and more on knowledge-based management to maintain the natural resource while raising yields.

Studies show that per capita rice consumption depends largely on income. Rice is a luxury for the world's poorest. They rely more on low-cost foods: coarse grains and sweet potatoes. When their incomes rise, their rice consumption goes up. Rice becomes less important only when incomes increase to a point where people can afford meat, fish, bread and vegetables.

In Asia, per capita rice consumption has declined only in high- and middle-income countries, such as Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and Thailand. The income threshold at which higher-quality, more varied foods are substituted for rice has not yet been reached for China, India, Indonesia and Bangladesh — which account for 70 per cent of world rice consumption and dominate growth in demand for rice.

The writer is head of the Social Sciences Division at the International Rice Research Institute based in Los Baños, Philippines. This article is reprinted from the Herald Tribune.

Israel, PLO agree on police

(Continued from page 1)

Dr. Shaath and PLO military officials had their own meeting on Saturday to prepare for the talks on Sunday, PLO sources said.

PLO sources said in Tunis that Mr. Arafat and Israel had tentatively agreed that power will be handed over to Palestinians in Jericho and the Gaza Strip by the end of the month.

"There are only few details to be worked out and the final accord is expected to be ready for signing on April 13," said one of the sources.

The sources said the PLO did not want to make a public announcement until the agreement was set, saying arrangements had foundered so many times during the nearly seven-month negotiating process it did not want to raise false expectations.

Senior PLO officials, including an Arafat aide, a member of the PLO Executive Committee and a senior official, said Mr. Arafat had received assurances from Mr. Rabin that Israel would complete its withdrawal of troops from Jericho and Gaza and hand over power to the Palestinians by April 30. The sources spoke on condition they not be identified further.

Assad receives Yeltsin message

(Continued from page 1)

undertake a full withdrawal from occupied Arab lands." Commenting on a statement by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres speculating progress on the Syrian-Israeli track of the peace process once talks

Mr. Arafat is anxious to move into the two zones as quickly as possible and form his own administration.

"He wants to build on the momentum created by the Cairo accord and hasten his movement into the occupied territories," one of the sources said. "He hopes once he is there and among his people, the whole atmosphere will change to his benefit."

"If everything goes well, he will be in Gaza not later than the end of April," the source said.

PLO officials said 6,500 of the 8,500 police to be deployed in the occupied territories will be drawn from among former PLO soldiers based in Arab countries, with the complement being gathered from recruits in the occupied territories.

Mr. Arafat plans to move three battalions from the 1,200-strong, Egypt-based Palestine Liberation Army, known as the Ain Jalut forces, the sources said.

Jibril Al Rejeib, an aide to Mr. Arafat, said Thursday an advance team of about 300 men could start deploying as early as the weekend. The rest will follow according to a timetable to be worked out with the Israelis, he said.

resumé, the radio commentary said.

"Progress in talks with Syria and other Arab parties is conditional on Israel's full pullout from the Golan and occupied Arab lands as well as on the full implementation of Security Council resolutions."



Israeli soldiers chase Palestinian protesters in Ramallah (AFP)

The United States has pledged to provide the police force with \$4 million in equipment and services.

PLO officials said Mr. Arafat called Secretary of State Warren Christopher hours after the Cairo agreement was signed to request quick aid.

Norway, Denmark to send units

(Continued from page 1)

of civilian police in the United Nations Protection Force in former Yugoslavia, and Arnstein Oeverkil, a police chief from south Norway, will travel to Cairo to study the observers' mandate.

Mr. Egeland said Johansen would stay on and play a key role in the observer force.

Denmark, which is contributing 35 observers, also is sending a delegation to Cairo on Sunday. Thirty-five observers will be Italian.

Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen told the national news agency Ritzau that the delegation will consist of foreign ministry and national police board officials. ("Israeli Foreign Minister

Shimon) Peres has phoned me and officially requested that Denmark contribute to the corps," Mr. Petersen said.

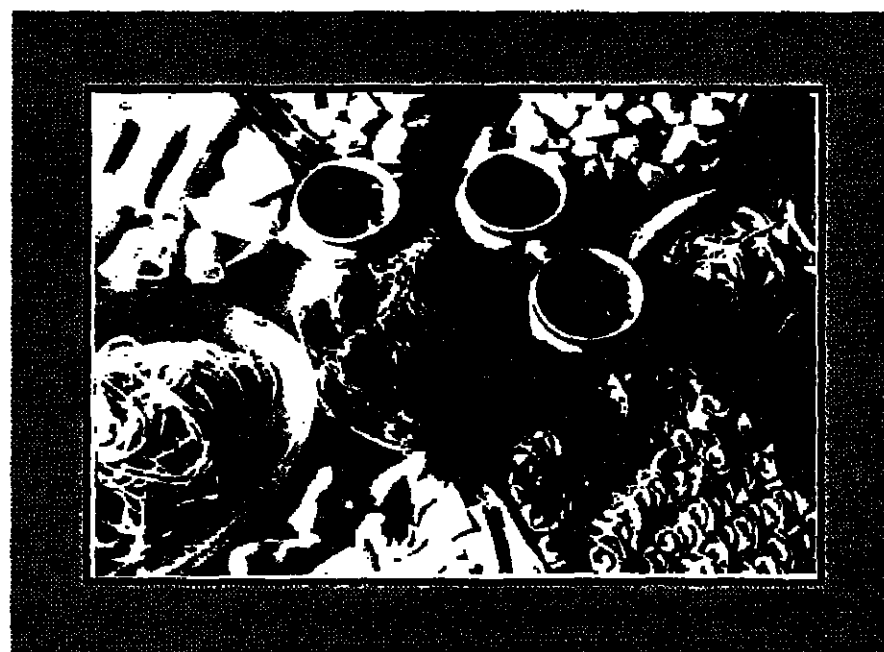
He said Denmark would demand reasonable security conditions for the police officers it expected to send to Hebron.

The European Union (EU) has welcomed the Israeli-Palestinian agreement on Hebron and said it was an important step towards peace.

"The presidency welcomes the Israeli-Palestinian agreement on security arrangements for the city of Hebron and the resumption of negotiations for the application of the Gaza-Jericho protocol," the EU said in a statement issued by the Greek presidency.

Greece currently holds the EU's rotating six-month presidency.

Grand Opening
Alfreda
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Egyptian government speeds up privatisation programme

CAIRO (R) — Egypt has accelerated its long-delayed privatisation programme by inviting the private sector to invest in and manage five more public companies.

A state holding company, the Engineering Industries Company, asked investors to submit offers to invest in Nasr Automotive Manufacturing Company and Delta Industrial Company (Ideal).

Nasr Automotive pioneered vehicle manufacturing in the Middle East in the 1960s and had sales of 556 million pounds (\$165 million) in 1993. It has a large factory in the south Cairo industrial suburb of Helwan.

Ideal, one of Egypt's main manufacturers of refrigerators, washing machines, dish washers and steel furniture, had sales of 324 million pounds (\$96 million) in 1993.

The holding company suggested several possible methods of investment: Buying up all or some of the company shares, buying all or part of their factories or using the factories through subcontracting, leasing or management contracts.

Priority would go to investors willing to modernise the

factories and retrain the workforces, it added.

The state's holding company for housing, tourism and cinema invited investors to buy a majority shareholding in Egyptian Vineyards Company, the country's sole producer of wines.

Chairman Hamed Fahmi said the holding company was seeking a principal investor or investors "to take a controlling interest and direct management" of the company.

The company, which owns its own vineyards and also produces spirits, is profitable, he said.

"A certain portion of the remaining shares of the company will be sold directly to the employees, and the balance of the shares will be placed in the Egyptian stock market for the general public," he added.

Mr. Fahmi told the government newspaper Al-Ahram that the holding company was also inviting bids for Free Shops, the company that runs duty-free at airports and elsewhere, but there was no formal announcement of this.

He said the holding company was looking for investors

willing to buy between 50 and 60 per cent of the shares in the companies and the rest of the shares would be offered to the public at a later stage.

The same formula will apply in the case of Al-Ahram Beverages Company, Egypt's only brewer, for which the holding company invited bids on Friday.

The deadlines for offers are July 14 for Al-Ahram Beverages, July 16 for Ideal, and July 31 for Egyptian Vineyards and Nasr Automotive Manufacturing. Details of the free shops invitation were not immediately available.

In another aspect of the privatisation programme, 51 public sector companies transferred 10 per cent of their shares to "Owners unions" on Thursday in the first stage of a scheme to turn the employees into shareholders.

The newspaper Al-Gumhouria said the shares transferred were worth 2.5 billion pounds (\$740 million).

Employees in the companies will be able to buy the shares at a 20 per cent discount with repayment spread over periods up to 10 years, government newspapers said.

NEW YORK (AP) — Just when the American economy seemed to have regained its lost power, the lights went out on Wall Street.

Tumbling stock prices and rising bond interest rates threaten to disrupt a recovery in business and consumer confidence that has taken years to build up since the recession at the start of the 1990s.

The stock market, which stood at record highs as recently as Jan. 31, has just recorded two back-to-back weeks of triple-digit point declines in the Dow Jones industrial average and has fallen about eight per cent from its peak.

Rates on long-term U.S. government bonds have climbed above seven per cent, their highest level in more than a year, in contrast to 5.75 per cent last fall.

"Fear and uncertainty pervade the marketplace," said Sung Won Sohn, economist at Norwest Corp. in Minneapolis, a holding company with bank operations extending from

Ohio to Arizona.

This simply doesn't fit with the positive news on the producing and consuming economy that has emerged since the closing months of last year.

"No one believes that there is a serious problem with the underlying American economy," President Clinton declared Thursday, just before the stock market closed down for the three-day Easter weekend. "It is healthy and it is sound."

So what gives with the markets? One benign explanation is that they are merely undergoing a "correction," or temporary pullback to purge excessive enthusiasm, that would set the stage for a renewed advance.

To those who say the recent rout seems far scarier than just a routine retrenchment, analysts observe that the "painless pullback" isn't possible — that real fear is necessary for a correction to accomplish what it is supposed to do. A somewhat more ominous

view holds that the markets face more persistent problems than that, arising from the Federal Reserve's (Fed) shift since early February toward a policy of tightening credit conditions.

For much of the 1980s and early '90s, analysts in this camp point out, the stock and bond markets boomed even as the economy struggled through a period of "rolling recessions" in various regions and industries.

They say a stimulative Fed policy was pumping large amounts of money and credit — or "liquidity," in Wall Street parlance — into the financial system.

Lacking places to absorb it in industry or in bank lending, this money found its way into securities. Banks, for example, tended to buy treasury bonds instead of lending money to, say, a local business with expansion plans.

Now, in this school of thought, the worry is that the liquidity flow is slowing, if not

cutting off entirely. The Fed, citing a wish to practice preventive medicine against inflation, has begun nudging up short term interest rates.

If this happens in a setting of stronger demand for money on main street, the reasoning goes, the markets could suffer disproportionately from even a relatively small change in liquidity. A stronger economy could wind up having a direct negative impact on the stock market by attracting liquidity away from Wall Street.

In any event, the forces that determine supply and demand for stocks are much more complicated than that. For one thing, markets have become more and more internationalised in recent years, so that any insular single country picture is likely to be incomplete at best.

For those who like to see things in simpler terms, the recent storms in the markets can be viewed as nothing out of the ordinary.

The only thing that makes them seem so intense, the

optimists say, is the long stretch of balmy weather that preceded them. The last time stocks fell even as much as 10 per cent was in the summer and fall of 1990, when the market were faced with war in the Arab Gulf and a looming recession.

Michael Price, a prominent mutual fund manager in Short Hills, N.J., placed a bet on an optimistic outcome late last week, opening two of the three funds in his group that have been closed to new investors.

The funds had stopped accepting investments from all but existing shareholders almost five years ago because prices didn't seem good places to put all the money that might come in.

Now, he says, "the current correction in the stock market presents us with attractive buying opportunities for mutual shares and mutual funds. We are opening the funds in order to take advantage of the values we see in equities right now."

Kuwait's big debtors bow to threat

KUWAIT (R) — Efforts to bury a financial scandal that has haunted Kuwait's economy for 12 years won a boost when most borrowers declared repayment plans by a Thursday midnight deadline, bankers said Saturday.

Only a fraction of 9,546 individual and corporate debtors missed the deadline drawn by a law aimed at settling a debt mountain that has enfeebled a once-buoyant banking system.

"It's been an exhausting process," said a banker, one of dozens who worked overtime to process debtors' papers last week and during the Friday and Saturday banking weekend.

"The registration lifts a heavy burden from us," he said. Those who never showed up

at banks to register now face the threat of bankruptcy because their debts fall immediately due, but most are believed to owe small amounts, they said.

The total 5.7 billion dinars (\$19 billion) in debt derives from the spectacular 1982 collapse of an unofficial stock exchange built on post-dated cheques and from commercial losses aggravated by Iraq's 1990-91 occupation.

Economists say the success of the programme would give a psychological boost to a banking system that was once one of the Gulf's most thriving, but which is stagnant because of the debts, low oil prices and worries about Iraq.

The debtors, who have never been publicly named but

include some of Kuwait's richest citizens, were required by law to choose whether to repay at a discount or through long-term rescheduling or repay at a discount or through long-term rescheduling or some combination of the two.

In the event almost all went for so-called immediate or "cash" settlement, which offers discounts of up to 75 per cent and does not require repayments until Sept. 6, 1995.

The Al-Shail Economic Consultancy, which has said the government's credibility is bound up with successful implementation, commented: "There are encouraging signs that the major debtors are proceeding with their debt settlements."

It is vital the crisis is resolved

promptly and all adverse effects are eliminated for economical and political consideration," it added.

Members of merchant families and senior government officials have been among debtors bowing to the threat of bankruptcy and declaring repayment plans under the settlement law, which took effect on Sept. 6.

To unravel the tangle the government bought the debts from commercial banks in 1992 in return for low-yielding 20-year bonds.

As debts are repaid the government will redeem the bonds, gradually freeing commercial banks' assets.

Commercial bankers, who act as agents for the government in the settlement process, said the six commercial banks now had to prepare reports for the central bank listing debtors' repayment plans and identifying those who did not register.

They said they understood

the central bank would consolidate the banks' information and pass it on for review to the finance ministry, which owns the debt. Only then would the government instruct the banks on what to do about the defaulters.

The bankers said they were urgently trying to contact some borrowers who never showed up and who may have mistakenly assumed that their debts were among consumer loans written off by the government.

The state wrote off the country's entire consumer debt after the 1991 Gulf war in one of several moves to compensate Kuwaitis for suffering experienced during the occupation.

The spread of debt is highly unbalanced, making predictions about the programme's effect on the economy difficult.

Parliament says 85 per cent of the debtors owe eight per cent of the debt, while 12 per cent of debtors owe 92 per cent.

India to tighten child labour laws as march starts

NEW DELHI (R) — A senior official said Friday that India planned to tighten its child labour laws but would strongly resist a U.S.-sponsored move to introduce labour-related clauses in the World Trade Organisation.

A pressure group campaigning for an end to child labour meanwhile began a cross-country march to publicise what it called an "inhuman practice."

The employment of children aged under 14 is theoretically illegal but officials estimate nearly 20 million children work in various industries. Non-government organisations put the figure at around 55 million.

"Although our labour laws are better than most other countries in the world, we are taking a second look at our child labour laws with a view to further liberalising them," said M.N. Buch, additional secretary in the labour ministry.

Mr. Buch said laws could be improved by enlarging the list of jobs banned for children as hazardous and also by providing more facilities for employed children.

"The government is already looking into a set of proposals in this regard and should come out with a response sooner rather than later," he said, without giving details.

The South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude Friday began a 5,000 kilometre march

demanding total abolition of child labour in India by 2000.

The march, to end in Delhi on April 24, will pass through states where child labour is concentrated such as Andhra Pradesh in the south, Maharashtra in central India and Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan in the north.

"Our aim is to make people aware of this inhuman practice," said organiser Kailash Satyarthi. The group staged a 2,000 kilometre march in February last year.

Washington wants to put trade and labour conditions on the agenda of the new World Trade Organisation (WTO), which is due to absorb the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

A meeting of ministers from 121 countries in Morocco this month, intended to celebrate the end of GATT negotiations, is expected to be dominated by the U.S. proposal.

Over 80 per cent of India's child workers are employed on farms, many as bonded labour, working to repay parents' debts, and in roadside tea stalls.

The remaining 20 per cent

work in industries such as tanning, explosives, fireworks, match manufacturing, carpet weaving, cloth printing and dyeing, all of which the government has banned as dangerous for children.

India, like other developing nations, plans to resist the U.S. proposal in Morocco. It says cheap labour including child labour is the only advantage it has in world markets.

India's export-oriented industries such as textiles and carpets employ a large number of children.

The G-15 group of developing nations that met last week in Delhi decided to resist the American proposal.

India officially banned the employment of children aged under 14 in 1948 and passed the child labour (prohibition and regulation) act in 1986, banning 17 industries considered hazardous from employing children above 14.

But the laws are rarely implemented by the state governments responsible for them. "These laws are respected more in the breach than in the observance," said Kailash Satyarthi, head of the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY APRIL 3, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Five positive Capricorn Moon aspects make this Easter one of the best aspects ones in recent years. This is a good time to get together with close family ties and associates groups on the same wave-length.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Handle practical affairs in the home and make this a most productive day. Be sure to show more cooperation with family members.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Take needed treatments to improve your health. Contact good friends and bring more happiness into their lives by just being with them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study the tenets that will bring you more inspiration and success in the future. Try to be of greater service to others now.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Take care of any personal affairs in a most precise manner. Relax tonight and plan for the new week for what must be done.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Being more objective in your thinking is wise now. You can easily clear up a condition at home now by taking quick action in what must be done.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Attend to those services

that give you peace of mind. See what you can do about pleasing your true friends with any problems of situations.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Find the right way to gain personal aims during daytime. Your mate could be in a bad mood now, but be patient and this will pass.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get busy in obtaining the information that will be helpful to you in the future. Be objective and get excellent results.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Take time to show appreciation to those who have been loyal to you in the past. Be sure to improve your appearance for any occasion.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Sideline pleasures that are too costly for your pocket-book. Strive to have increased harmony with family members.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Find the right ethical philosophy by which to regulate your life. This is not the right time to pursue a new project you have in mind.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Using your intuition more than usual can bring excellent results now. Express happiness with the one you love on this great day.

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NEMOD

UPYTT

MULEHI

LIZZES

Print answer here: _____

Saturday's Jumbles: TWICE FINIS GYPSUM STUPID

Answer: What the law students studied at the pool — SWIM "SUITS"

You're right as always, dear

HE NEVER FOUGHT WITH HIS WIFE BECAUSE SHE KNEW HOW TO

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

THE Daily Crossword by Dorothy B. Martin

ACROSS

1 Jason's ship

5 Lamb's name?

10 Name in soccer

14 Depend on?

15 Gorme of song

17 Cupid

18 Squandering title by title

20 Track

21 Elicit or Blake

22 Musical passage

23 Hunting dogs

25 Foray

27 Sea bird

28 Games

32 North

34 Glue

35 Set of tools

36 Shaggy dog

37 Luffy net

38 Turner of song

39 Mover's truck

40 Actor Richard

41 Doughty

42 Overwhelmed

43 Word of admonition

45 Facial feature

46 Type to one side

48 Picturing mark

52 A Florida

53 Tear

54 Chirrup

57 Sharp style

58 — majesty

59 Competitor

60 Day

61 Guide metals

62 White poplar

63 Fairy tale monster

DOWN

1 Bedouins

2 Address Taylor

3 Britton

4 Olive —

6 Harp cousins

7 Revised copy

8 late

9 Asian holiday

10 Easter feature

11 Middle East

12 Extended

13 Hence

14 Hence

15 Hence

16 Hence

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Economy

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, APRIL 3, 1994 7

Oman opens investment door to foreigners

ABU DHABI (R) — Oman is to sell off shares in more government-held companies in 1994 and link its stock market with Bahrain as it continues to open its economy to private and foreign investment, an official said.

Mahmoud Jarwani, Oman Stock Exchange director, was quoted Saturday as saying Oman and Bahrain were to link their stock markets by listing public joint-stock companies in each market.

"The agreement shall be executed, between the two markets, by the end of the year," he said in a statement in the National Bank of Abu Dhabi's monthly bulletin on Gulf stock markets.

Bahrain Stock Exchange Director General Fawzi Behzad told Reuters in January that the two countries signed an agreement in 1992 to have cross-listing of securities before the year's end.

Mr. Jarwani also said Oman will set up two international funds Japanese and British groups to invest in Oman's economy.

"Non-Omani citizens will be permitted to invest in these funds, provided that their investments should not exceed 49 per cent of the total fund," he said.

One is the Oryx Fund, Oman's first mutual fund to include foreigners. This month it will offer units in the fund with a face value of five Omani riyals (\$13). It will be listed on the London and Muscat stock exchanges as of May.

Oman's National Insurance Co. will manage the \$45 million fund in Muscat. Blakeney Management will handle it in London.

Foreigners can also buy government bonds on its exchange.

The Gulf Arab state has announced plans to gradually

open its economy to the private sector and attract foreign investment in fields traditionally controlled by the state.

Mr. Jarwani said one such area was utilities. Oman's Minh Electricity Co. is to float shares to the public soon, he said.

He said government holdings in three companies —

Oman Insurance Co., Gulf Hotels Co., and National Bank of Oman — have been sold to the public worth 8.8 million riyals (\$22.8 million) since it started a privatisation plan last August.

He expected this amount to rise in 1994 as the government privatises gas, petrochemicals, minerals and raw materials.

Algeria concludes latest IMF talks

PARIS (R) — Algeria has concluded talks with the IMF on a loan to prop up the economy hit by low oil prices and civil unrest, the APS news agency said Saturday.

APS, monitored in Paris, said talks in Washington ended Friday and Algerian experts had to work out details of an economic reform programme acceptable to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

There was no announcement of when a loan agreement might be signed.

Algeria, its economy crippled by low world prices for petroleum and a campaign of attacks by fundamentalists trying to create an Islamic state, is hoping for an IMF standby credit of about \$500 million and a \$300 million loan to finance imports.

It also wants agreement from the Paris Club of creditor nations on relief from payments on the country's \$36 billion, which is almost as much as Algeria earned from

petroleum sales.

France's Foreign Minister Alain Juppe during a visit to Tokyo this week said he had urged Japan to help relieve the debt burden which he said was threatening Algeria's stability and security.

APS said Algeria's negotiations with the IMF had now entered their "most difficult stage," requiring Algeria to come up with precise details of an economic reform package in order to have the IMF approve a letter of intent for the loans.

Algeria's central bank governor, Abdul Wahab Karamane, attended the talks at the IMF headquarters in Washington in February to present Algeria's conditions for the letter of intent, APS said.

Hocine Benissad, a former Algerian finance minister, in a recent statement said that the IMF had been burned too often in the past by fluctuations in Algerian policy and was likely to impose tough terms.

Suez Canal ready to fight price war

ISMAILIA, Egypt (R) — The Suez Canal is ready to wage a price war against any competitors and is confident it could undercut them, its chairman said Saturday.

"I will manoeuvre through the canal fees... If I feel that old customers are running away or are using another route, I will always resort to this card," Mohammad Izzat Adel, chairman of the Suez Canal Authority, told Reuters in an interview.

The Suez Canal, more than 125 years old, would have the clear advantage over any new scheme because it had repaid the cost of building it years ago, he added.

"So, I can go into the price war right up the hilt, while the others can't do the same... we are ready to go into a fierce price war but in the end both sides would lose," he added.

Mr. Adel said the most immediate threat was the expansion of the SUMED pipeline, which carries crude oil across

land from the Gulf of Suez to a terminal near the Mediterranean city of Alexandria.

The expansion has increased SUMED's capacity to 117 million tonnes a year from 80 million with effect from this month.

But in the case of SUMED, which is owned half by Egypt and half by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and Abu Dhabi, the answer was coordination rather than confrontation, Mr. Adel said.

It now costs about \$1.50 less to move a tonne of crude through SUMED than it does to move it through the canal.

Mr. Adel said the Suez Canal Authority had asked SUMED not to accept oil from tankers which are small enough to go through the canal, which can take ships with a draught of 53 feet.

"I hope SUMED will concentrate on Europe's and America's oil needs and leave for us the ports in the

Mediterranean which can take medium tankers rather than the giants," he added.

Further into the future, Israel and Qatar could threaten Egypt's interests if they built a pipeline to take Qatari gas to Israeli ports for shipment on to Europe, he said.

"This would be hitting the canal below the waist," he added.

The Suez Canal Authority has already tried to undermine such a scheme by offering Qatar a 35 per cent discount on the fees for taking its gas through the canal.

Qatar has said there is no question of selling its gas to Israel until there is a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Adel was dismissive about most other schemes still on the drawing board, such as railways and canals through the Dead Sea.

"Most of them are hyped up

and they won't be able to compete with me now or in the future," he said.

He noted that the Suez Canal had already used the price weapon and as a result had raised revenue in 1993 by \$83 million. The canal earned more than \$1.9 billion last year.

The canal's second weapon against competitors would be to finish the current expansion programme, which is moving slowly because of uncertainty about the return on the investment.

"I can almost say that (the expansion) will amount to the decisive blow against all competitors," he said.

After an investment of about \$800 million, the canal would be big enough to take vessels of more than 250,000 tonnes and revenue would rise by 8.5 per cent, he said.

"But we have to be certain that the \$800 million will bring in a rapid return," he added.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
BANKING BANK CAPITAL AMMAN - JORDAN				
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 662170				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 02/04/1994				
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADED VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
AMMAN BANK	19,068	190.000	190.250	191.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	118,050	7.850	7.900	8.100
BANK OF JORDAN	12,749	4.400	4.410	4.610
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	194,797	4.400	4.400	4.300
JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	7,730	3.240	3.250	3.300
THE JORDANIAN BANK	23,408	8.840	8.820	8.920
JORDAN EXCHANGE BANK	36,788	1.220	1.230	1.320
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	35,487	2.240	2.250	2.250
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	5,297	4.000	4.020	4.100
JORDAN TRADING BANK/COV	132,927	4.250	4.310	4.390
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	287	5.150	5.150	5.150
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	6,355	4.250	4.300	4.300
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	120,855	9.100	9.100	9.600
THE JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	49,350	4.680	4.700	4.700
THE JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	82,131	2.020	2.010	2.020
PELAGIA INVESTMENT BANK	67,662	2.450	2.470	2.440
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	10,360	3.200	3.200	3.180
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	15,487	2.240	2.250	2.250
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	335	1.280	1.240	1.240
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	43,678	4.400	4.420	4.600
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	2,284	0.740	0.770	0.780
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	43,678	4.400	4.420	4.600
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,719	1.840	1.660	1.660
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	880	0.930	0.980	0.980
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	2,070	4.120	4.150	4.150
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,281	2.170	2.180	2.190
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	3,454	1.960	1.960	1.960
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	2,227	1.720	1.730	1.730
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	37,098	2.990	3.060	3.060
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,544	1.840	1.840	1.840
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	9,305	10.200	10.180	10.150
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,544	1.840	1.840	1.840
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	149,132	13.150	13.100	13.100
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	79,590	4.400	4.400	4.400
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,520	4.400	4.400	4.400
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	2,143	4.310	4.280	4.290
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,520	4.400	4.400	4.400
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	790	3.120	3.160	3.160
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	0.390	0.390	0.390	0.390
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	458,865	16.200	16.300	16.500
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	4,154	2.190	2.190	2.300
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,520	4.400	4.400	4.400
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,231	1.540	1.570	1.550
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,520	4.400	4.400	4.400
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	9,509	5.340	5.340	5.140
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	6,440	3.150	3.100	3.050
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	12,088	2.190	2.190	2.140
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	2,315	4.750	4.650	4.650
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	4,342	1.150	1.150	1.150
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,250	0.400	0.360	0.370
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	12,056	7.070	7.300	7.300
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	1,520	4.400	4.400	4.400
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	2,544	1.070	1.050	1.060
JORDANIAN BANKING & INVESTMENT	342,810	5.510	5.410	5.430
GRAND TOTAL	3,677,000			
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	106,469			
TRADED VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET	10	139758		

Financial Markets		
in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank		
U.S. Dollar in International Markets		
Currency	New York Close 11/3/94	New York Close 17/4/94
Sterling Pound	1.4835	1.4735
Deutsche Mark	1.6740	1.6980
Swiss Franc	1.4157	1.4269
French Franc	5.7200	5.7943
Japanese Yen	102.70	103.68
European Currency Unit	1.1493	1.1568

Eurocurrency Interest Rates				
Date: 2/4/1994				
Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.3750	3.6250	4.0000	4.5000
Sterling Pound	4.9375	5.0625	5.1250	5.4375
Deutsche Mark	5.5000	5.4375	5.3750	5.2500
Swiss Franc	5.9375	5.8750	5.8125	5.7500
French Franc	6.0000	5.9375	5.8750	5.8125
Japanese Yen	2.0000	2.0000	2.0625	2.1250
European Currency Unit	6.2500	6.1800	6.0600	5.9300

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin		
Date: 2/4/1994		
Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7020	0.7040
Sterling Pound	1.0335	1.0385
Deutsche Mark	0.4132	0.4153
Swiss Franc	0.4916	0.4941
French Franc	0.1210	0.1216
Japanese Yen	0.6752	0.6786
Dutch Guilder	0.3677	0.3695
Swedish Krona	0.0431	0.0435
Italian Lira	0.0431	0.0435
Belgian Franc	0.0431	0.0435

Other Currencies		
Date: 2/4/1994		
Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8460	1.8600
Lebanese Lira	0.040575	0.041755
Saudi Riyal	0.1869	0.1880
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3250	2.3600
Qatari Riyal	0.1905	0.1915
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.8040	1.8200
UAE Dirham	0.1905	0.1915
Greek Drachma	0.2675	0.3275
Cypriot Pound	1.3235	1.4125

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S/E

De Klerk welcomes Buthelezi's tentative offer on poll registration

CAPE TOWN (R) — President F.W. de Klerk Wednesday welcomed Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi's tentative offer to register for South Africa's first all-race election in April.

But Mr. De Klerk, responding to questions in parliament, said he foresaw problems with a call for international mediation that was part of Mr. Buthelezi's agreement with his main black rival African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela Tuesday.

"I am very pleased the meeting took place, though I think it was very late in coming. My attitude with regard to (international mediation) is that...time is of the essence. If time is of the essence I foresee some problems with the concept of mediation."

Mr. De Klerk said negotiations with right-wing black and white parties would not halt if parliament adopted pro-federal constitutional amendments Wednesday and ended its sitting.

"We would be willing and able to negotiate from tomorrow in any effort to reach further agreement which might ensure all inclusiveness in the full electoral process."

"I think it is possible for us in the next week or two to make some progress."

Mr. De Klerk said the April 26-28 election would take place as scheduled and warned that the government would use all the force at its disposal to prevent any disruption.

"From the government's side the security forces will be used, the law will be applied...to ensure that the election is free and fair."

"The government will use everything at its disposal to ensure that law and order will be maintained and the elections will go ahead as planned and they will be free and fair," he said.

Right-wing white radicals have threatened civil war if their demands for an independent Afrikaner homeland are not heeded.

Mr. De Klerk said the government had a contingency plan to ensure that voting took place in the Bophuthatswana and KwaZulu black homelands, both members of the autonomy-seeking Freedom Alliance of white and black conservatives including Inkatha.

"I will ensure the maintenance of law and order and will use all the facilities available to

the state to that effect, according to the threat and according to the situation as it develops."

Earlier, the government's chief democracy negotiator Roelf Meyer said on independent Radio 702 he did not think international mediation was necessary.

"International mediation, what does it mean...If it means that the parties have to get together under international mediation, I don't think there's a need for that. We are able to talk to each other."

Freedom Alliance Chairman Rowan Cronje said Tuesday night he was trying to arrange a meeting of Alliance negotiators to discuss the Mandela-Buthelezi deal. A time and venue have still to be arranged.

Negotiators pondered their next moves in South Africa after Mr. Buthelezi made a conditional last-minute offer to sign up for the country's historic first all-race elections in April.

The Zulu leader said after a rare meeting with Mr. Mandela Tuesday that he would consider provisionally registering his Inkatha Freedom Party but would keep open his option of boycotting the poll.

Political parties have until Friday to register and five

more days to nominate candidates for the first vote in South African history in which all races can cast ballots.

Mr. Buthelezi and his main black rival, Mr. Mandela, said in a statement they had "agreed to explore with their principals the possibility of international mediation."

Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini is demanding a sovereign state.

Mr. Mandela, whose ANC is almost certain to win an overall majority, said he was encouraged by his first meeting in nine months with Mr. Buthelezi.

"We have laid a solid foundation not only for further progress but for possible breakthroughs," he said.

But Mr. Buthelezi, asked if he was closer to taking part in the elections, replied: "Not at all. I am not close at all."

A Democratic Party legislator said Mr. Buthelezi appeared to be playing for time and hoping the election would be postponed.

Mr. Buthelezi said Wednesday the position of King Goodwill in post-apartheid South Africa had not yet been resolved and called for a separate Zulu kingdom.

Rutskoi urges reconciliation

MOSCOW (R) — Former Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi, freed from jail last week under an amnesty, defended October's armed uprising against Boris Yeltsin Wednesday but called on Russians to bury hatred.

In his first statement since his release from Moscow's Lefortovo Prison, he attacked the "irresponsible windbags and dishonest politicians and journalists" who, he said, had twisted the truth over autumn clashes in Moscow that claimed 140 lives.

Radical politicians and some senior businessmen have suggested Mr. Rutskoi's release could set Russia back on the path to civil conflict, pointing to May Day as a possible flash-point.

President Boris Yeltsin warned the arrested prisoners Tuesday they would be immediately re-arrested if they tried to destabilise the situation in the country.

"Think it over," Mr. Rutskoi said in a statement addressed to the citizens of Russia and the new Duma legislature, which had annexed him. "Do not whip up hysteria. Hasn't enough blood been shed for you?"

Mr. Rutskoi made no reference to any presidential ambitions. But aides have said they expect him to run in elections due in 1996 and the general tone of his comments suggested he sought a future national role.

Mr. Rutskoi walked free Saturday along with six others

who led an uprising two weeks after the president had cast aside the constitution and abolished Russia's Soviet-era parliament.

Armed parliament supporters broke out of encirclement in the White House on Oct. 3 and, on Mr. Rutskoi's urging, stormed the mayor's offices and Ostankino Television Centre.

Mr. Yeltsin, long estranged from his vice-president, crushed the rebellion the following day using tanks.

"In the autumn of last year, all those in the House of Soviets (White House) and on the barricades fulfilled their civic and patriotic duty to the last, defending a young parliamentary culture, democracy, the constitution," Mr. Rutskoi said.

Many of them paid the highest price — their lives — saving the honour and dignity of the Russian state, staving off a slide into dictatorship. They left this life victors and their names will be written into the pages of the history of our motherland for centuries," the signed statement said.

The release of Mr. Rutskoi, an air force general, was a blow to Mr. Yeltsin who had tried until the last to have it postponed.

Mr. Rutskoi took one oblique shot at Mr. Yeltsin, criticising those who "walk over the constitution of the state for the sake of their own personal power."

In addressing his statement to the Duma, Mr. Rutskoi

appeared to accept the legitimacy of the legislative body Mr. Yeltsin created to replace the old parliament.

"I bow to the laws of my country, the will of the people's representatives," he said.

Mr. Rutskoi, who was sworn in as acting president by the old parliament during the two-week confrontation with Mr. Yeltsin, withdrew to a country house shortly after his release.

Former parliamentary Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov, arrested along with Mr. Rutskoi on Oct. 4 and released moments before him, has declared he is leaving politics.

But ITAR-TASS news agency said Mr. Khasbulatov was given a rousing welcome by thousands when he returned to visit his mother in his home town, Grozny, in the rebel Russian Republic of Chechnya in the north Caucasus.

Chechnya, which has unilaterally declared independence under its maverick President Dzhokhar Dudaev, has suffered dire economic problems since its 1991 break with Moscow. But Gen. Dudaev has kept all opposition at bay.

Meanwhile, the 1991 Soviet coup trial has come to an ignominious end, closing the final chapter of an episode which had threatened a new cold war but ended up hastening the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Russian Supreme Court, bowing to an amnesty ordered by parliament, Tuesday dropped treason charges against the men.

Deneuve appointed number 2 on Cannes jury

PARIS (R) — French actress Catherine Deneuve has been appointed vice-president of the jury at this year's Cannes Film Festival, organisers said Tuesday. It will be the first time the 50-year-old Deneuve, a symbol of French cinema after a career spanning more than three decades, will sit on the jury for the May 12-23 festival that will be headed this year by U.S. actor-director Clint Eastwood. "We believe she deserves an extra jewel in her crown. The reason for choosing her is the particular admiration we French have for this great lady," a spokeswoman for the organisers said.

Bobbit cases inspires male chastity belt

ROME (R) — Rome sculptor Angelo Camerino, who made headlines four years ago by exhibiting sculptures of female chastity belts, is cashing in on a male version in the wake of the John and Lorena Bobbitt case. Mr. Camerino Tuesday said he had sold three male chastity belts to an American living in Rome. The belts are stainless steel and lined with leather. "He asked me for the belts, which he wanted to send to some friends in New York," the sculptor said. "He told me they would wear them at night so that their wives can't do a Mrs. Bobbitt." Lorena Bobbitt, freed Monday from a mental hospital, was acquitted by reason of insanity on Jan. 21 on a charge of slashing off her sleeping husband's penis. Mr. Camerino said the male belts cost 2.5 million lire (\$1,500) each but he had sold the client the third for a cut price of two million (\$1,200).

Spielberg: Time for German Nazi guilt is over

FRANKFURT (R) — Holocaust film Schindler's List was getting its German premiere Tuesday amid debate on why Oskar Schindler's deeds were unrecognised for so long before and why others did not act as he did to save Jewish lives. But U.S. director-producer Steven Spielberg refused to see his film as a reminder of guilt for today's Germans or as especially poignant in view of a recent upsurge in neo-Nazi racist attacks, many of them fatal. Spielberg, many of whose older relatives were killed in the Holocaust, said a small violent fringe should not be seen as representing Germans as a whole, or even as real Nazis. "I'm not sure the thugs who call themselves neo-Nazis really know what their beliefs are," he told a news conference. "It just gives them a platform for hatred." "I would feel it is time in Germany for this generation to teach their children without showing guilt, and knowing that education is the way to stop another Holocaust happening." Spielberg's film tells the story of Schindler, a Nazi war profiteer who saved about 1,200 Jews from the gas chambers. The American producer insisted on holding the German premiere in Frankfurt as a tribute to his subject, who spent the last years of his life here, and died in poverty in 1974.

Altman's fashion satire to start shooting in Paris

PARIS (R) — When the curtain goes up on Paris ready-to-wear shows, Hollywood's master ironist Robert Altman will have his camera poised for his next satirical swipe — this time at the cut-throat, shallow fashion crowd. Paris salons are buzzing with gossip about Pret-A-Porter (ready-to-wear), the star-studded, Nashville-style portrait of the fashion industry, which director Altman is filming during and around the Paris autumn winter collections that open Friday. Although he swears he comes to praise fashion, not bury it, Pret-A-Porter is expected to be just as biting as The Player, Altman's send-up of greedy Hollywood power brokers. Yet models, designers and fashion journalists have been clamouring for a role, even if it is at their own expense. The film, an ambition of Altman's for nearly 10 years, will be shot in pseudo-documentary style, mixing actors with real figures from the fashion world. Filming begins at designer Sonia Rykiel's show Sunday. A tall man with piercing eyes and a goatee that make him resemble Wild Bill Hickok, Altman has been snooping around Paris collections for the last year.

Koreas squabble over fine print ahead of meeting

SEOUL (R) — North and South Korea, due to resume talks Thursday after an acrimonious four-month break, squabbled Wednesday over the terms for the meeting at the cold war border to discuss the North's nuclear programme.

Song Yong-Dae, Seoul's chief delegate, cautiously welcomed North Korea's decision to accept an invitation to a meeting at Panmunjom, the village that straddles the frontier.

But he told the North that progress over the nuclear impasse would be made only if it dropped preconditions that fouled earlier attempts to return to the negotiating table.

"There will be progress in the working-level contacts (Thursday) if the Northern side does not present earlier preconditions such as 'an end to nuclear war exercises' and the 'abandonment of Seoul's international cooperation system'," Mr. Song told reporters.

He was referring to the guarded message from Pyongyang, delivered Tuesday, accepting the invitation to Panmunjom.

North Korea said it would attend the meeting but called for an end to South Korea's annual military exercises with its U.S. allies, mainly war games codenamed Team Spirit that are scheduled for later this month.

It also demanded that Seoul divorce itself from international efforts, led by the United States, to persuade Pyongyang to open suspect nuclear plants to inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency. "We are seeing more of the

brinkmanship which the North and South always play ahead of talks but I think the meeting will go ahead," said a Western diplomat.

"But we should not expect any major breakthrough, we should simply be happy that North and South are starting the talks process again."

The meeting will focus on a proposed exchange of envoys charged with ending the row over inspection of the North's nuclear sites.

The two have held three rounds of border talks to discuss the envoy exchange. But the North broke off contacts last November after the South rejected its call to end military exercises with the United States.

An announcement on a suspension of this year's Team Spirit manoeuvres is expected from the Seoul Defence Ministry Thursday but North Korea wants other, smaller-scale exercises to be scrapped as well.

The North-South meeting became possible after Pyongyang agreed Friday in talks with the United States to allow international inspections of nuclear facilities, designed to allay Western fears the North is trying to develop nuclear weapons.

In return, the United States committed itself to cancelling Team Spirit and scheduled a third round of high-level U.S.-North Korean talks later in March.

Six IAEA inspectors arrived in North Korea Tuesday for a two-week visit to check nuclear sites for any evidence that radioactive fuel has been diverted to build atomic weapons.

Blast cuts Armenia's rail links with other states

TBILISI (R) — An explosion on a railway bridge has cut the only railway line linking the former Soviet Republic of Armenia to the rest of the world, Georgian officials said Wednesday.

The officials, at the Georgian Interior Ministry, said it would take three or four days to repair the 70-member (230-foot) bridge, some 60 kilometres south of Tbilisi.

"The explosion was very strong and it damaged the bridge very badly," one official said. "It will take at least three or four days to restore communications. It is obviously a terrorist act."

A series of explosions in Georgia have cut rail, road and gas pipeline links between landlocked Armenia and the rest of the former Soviet Union.

Armenia blames ethnic Azeris living in Georgia for the blasts. Azerbaijan, locked in conflict with Armenia over the Armenian-populated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, denies it is responsible.

Meanwhile, Moscow sent a top general to Armenia and Azerbaijan to secure a Russian-mediated ceasefire which began Tuesday in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh enclave and seemed to be hold-

ing despite minor violations. Karabakh officials said Azeri forces shelled their positions overnight but a military spokesman in Baku denied this and said "all was quiet."

Russia's ITAR-TASS news agency said Colonel-General Georgy Kondratyev would hold talks with Armenian and Azerbaijani officials on implementation of a peace plan mediated by Moscow's Defence Minister Pavel Grachev on Feb. 18.

The plan envisaged a ceasefire, which came into effect Tuesday, and a subsequent withdrawal of troops to create safety zones. A joint staff would be deployed in the area, consisting of officers from Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Karabakh.

Gen. Kondratyev, deputy defence minister, told TASS the joint staff would consist of 250 officers, 69 of them Russian.

The territory, with a majority Armenian population, was placed under a Russian military

presence. Thousands of people have been killed and dozens of thousands forced to flee their homes in six years of warfare in which Karabakh Armenians have seized big chunks of the Azeri territory proper.

Vietnam, U.S. make good start to new relationship

HANOI (R) — Vietnam and the United States have made a good start to their new relationship with "positive" talks on complex financial claims and opening diplomatic missions, sources close to the negotiations said Wednesday.

"Talks on both questions have been positive," one source said, adding that discussions on opening liaison offices in Hanoi and Washington were continuing.

The negotiations — together with what the U.S. State De-

partment called a "productive exchange of views" in New York on human rights — marked a promised start to a new chapter in relations which opened when the United States scrapped a 30-year economic embargo against Hanoi a month ago.

Senior officials ended a first round of talks in Hanoi Tuesday on U.S. and Vietnamese claims to \$520 million in property and bank accounts dating from the end of the Vietnam War in 1975.

Houston, Sting and Aladdin take Grammy Awards

NEW YORK (R) — Whitney Houston to Grammys: *It Will Always Love You*.

Houston and the soundtrack for her film *The Bodyguard* won top honours at the 36th annual Grammy Music Awards Tuesday in a show that mixed glitter with unexpected controversy.

Houston was named Best Female Vocalist at the U.S. music industry's top awards for her monster hit single *I Will Always Love You*, the lead song from the film.

The song was also named Record of the Year and The Bodyguard soundtrack album, which has sold a record-tying 11 million copies, was named Album of the Year, pushing aside competition from Billy Joel and Sting. In sales the album is tied with the soundtracks for Saturday Night Fever and Dirty Dancing.

Sting won three awards, including Best Male Vocal and two awards for his album *Ten Summoner's Tales*.

A Whole New World, the theme song from the hit Walt Disney film *Aladdin*, written by Alan Menken and Tim Rice, was named Song of the Year, giving the sound track from the film five awards for the evening.

Billy Joel and Neil Young, both multiple nominees, were shut out from the awards.

The evening was not without controversy, the Irish rock group U2's lead singer Bono used the banned "F" word in accepting an award for Best Alternative Album and the show cut to a commercial before Frank Sinatra could finish accepting his Grammy Living Legend Award.

In accepting the award for Zoetrope, Bono said: "I'd like to give a message to the young people of America. We shall continue to abuse our position and F — up the mainstream."

The banned word was heard on the live television broadcast beamed to millions of homes but was cut out when the programme was beamed to the west coast three hours later. Bono apologised after the programme if he had offend anyone.

Sinatra choked back tears as a star-studded audience of 4,000 gave him a standing ovation.

Acceptance of the Grammy Living Legend Award was cut off when the television broadcast went to a commercial before he finished speaking. The organisers of the award said Sinatra had his own pro-

ducers for the segment and they were the ones who cut to the commercial.

Host Gary Shandling said: "Mr. Sinatra should have been allowed to finish his speech. That was a mistake. This is live television and Mr. Sinatra will cut us off in an hour."

"I just got off the phone with Lorena Bobbitt and she said 'I wouldn't cut off Frank Sinatra,'" he quipped, referring to the woman recently acquitted of malicious wounding for cutting off her husband's penis.

Billy Joel interrupted his performance of the hit song "The River Of Dreams," looked at his watch and said, "valuable advertising time going by. Dollars, dollars, dollars," he smiled, then resumed playing.

Houston opened the awards ceremony at the art deco Radio City Music Hall by singing *I Will Always Love You*, which dominated the charts, radio airwaves and music video stations.

Then she was handed the award by country music star Dolly Parton, who wrote the song in 1974 with what she said was a broken heart until the royalties rolled in.

Rhythm and blues singer Toni Braxton was named Best New Artist and Best Female R&B Vocalist beating out Houston. Dwight Yoakum won Best Country Male Vocal for *Ain't That Lonely Yet*.

Natalie Cole won the Jazz Vocalist Award, two years after she won major awards for her *Unforgettable* album. Rock singer Meat Loaf made a comeback by winning Best Rock Vocal for *If I Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That)*.

The best classical album went to Pierre Boulez for conducting the Chicago Symphony in Bartok's *The Wooden Prince*. Singer Tony Bennett posted the major upset of the night when his album *Steppin' Out* beat out Barbra Streisand's *Back To Broadway* for the Best Traditional Pop Vocal Performance Award.

I don't know what Barbra's gonna say about this," Bennett said with a laugh while accepting it.

who was fired by the Metropolitan Opera after a recent temper tantrum, did not show up to accept the Best Opera Recording Award for Handel's *Semele*, which she shared with several other soloists.



Singer Whitney Houston cheers over her Grammy Award Tuesday. Her soundtrack to the movie *The Bodyguard*, with the single *I Will Always Love You*, won awards for Record Of the Year and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance (AFP photo)



Sting holds one of the three Grammy Awards he won at the Annual Grammy Awards at Radio City Music Hall in New York (AFP photo)

1 dead, 4 hurt in Australia crime office blast

ADELAIDE, Australia (R) — A policeman was killed and five people injured Wednesday when a bomb was passed through security checks and tore through the Adelaide office of Australia's National Crime Authority (NCA).

One of the injured men, who police said was an NCA lawyer in his mid-30s, was in serious condition after undergoing surgery.

Police said the bomb through the 12th floor office of the NCA, a controversial agency that fights organised crime. Glass and debris rained into the street as the blast shook the central business district of Adelaide, the normally quiet capital of South Australia, shortly after 9 a.m. local time.

Four others were treated in hospital and released after treatment for various injuries, including a broken wrist and smoke inhalation from a fire set off by the bomb.

"This is a wicked and evil thing that has been done," Prime Minister Paul Keating told reporters. "This is the worst kind of thing that I could imagine."

"This is something which is completely out of the character of this country. This is something that this community shouldn't tolerate and as a government we won't be."

Police said they had no warning of the blast and as far as was known no threats had been made.

The dead policeman was identified as Detective Sergeant Geoffrey Leigh Bowen, 36, a father of two young children.

"We have no idea what sort of a device it was. Suffice it to say it was certainly a bomb," a police spokesman said.

NCA officials said that after the blast they had boosted security measures at all NCA offices in Australia. Police said a task force of 40 detectives had been assigned to the case.

Police would not comment on the how the bomb was delivered or the nature of the device, although a spokesman said the NCA's scanners were designed to detect ferrous materials.

Sheringham earns Tottenham vital win

LONDON (R) — Teddy Sheringham returned like a lucky charm after five months on the sidelines to lift Tottenham's relegation worries with a goal in their 2-1 victory at Norwich Saturday.

Within three minutes of coming on as a substitute for his first game since October following three knee operations, Sheringham put Tottenham ahead in the 56th minute.

But it took an heroic penalty save from Ian Walker and a Norwich own goal to secure Tottenham's second victory in 12 games.

Everton slipped closer to the relegation zone with a crushing 5-1 defeat at Sheffield Wednesday — their fourth in five games.

Their plight was made worse as Oldham, Manchester City and Sheffield United below them all won.

Norwegian striker Jostein Flo ended a personal goal drought with two in Sheffield United's shock 2-1 win at Liverpool, while Manchester City crushed league cup winners Aston Villa 3-0.

F.A. Cup semi-finalists Oldham also weighed in with a big win, coming from behind to thrash Queens Park Rangers 4-1 and pull level on points with Everton, who are now only three points above the relegation zone.

Even more depressing for Everton was the news that Peter Beagrie, who had scored only once in 19 games for them, scored his first in only his third match for relegation rivals Manchester City.

City's two other newcomers signed last month, Paul Walsh and German Uwe Rosler, also scored for the second successive game to earn the club their first win in six matches.

Bottom placed Swindon Town battled hard to earn a 1-1 draw at Arsenal, with Paul Bodin's 29th minute penalty cancelling out Alan Smith's fourth-minute opener.

Southampton slipped to second bottom after losing 2-0 at Chelsea with John Spencer scoring his sixth goal in nine games and Norwegian defender Erlend Johnsen his first in four years at the club.

West Ham United left out top scorer Lee Chapman but registered their first win in eight games, 2-1 at home to Ipswich, thanks to goals from Matthew Rush, playing only his second game of the season, and Trevor Morley.

Flo, with only one goal in his last 20 games, condemned Liverpool to their first home league defeat since September as Sheffield United staged their second dramatic fight-back in a week.

Sheffield, who came from 2-0 down to West Ham Monday, went behind to an Ian Rush goal after just three minutes.

Flo equalised a minute after half time and seized the winner 18 minutes from time, out-jumping Neil Ruddock to glance a header from Franz Carr's centre over goal keeper David James.

Former England manager Graham Taylor celebrated his first game in charge of first division Wolverhampton Wanderers with a 2-1 win over Tranmere Rovers.

On-loan Guy Whittingham hit his fourth goal of the week to put Wolves ahead and, after John Aldridge had equalised, Lee Mills scored the winner seven minutes from time.

City's two other newcomers signed last month, Paul Walsh and German Uwe Rosler, also scored for the second successive game to earn the club their first win in six matches.

Bottom placed Swindon Town battled hard to earn a 1-1 draw at Arsenal, with Paul Bodin's 29th minute penalty cancelling out Alan Smith's fourth-minute opener.

Southampton slipped to second bottom after losing 2-0 at Chelsea with John Spencer scoring his sixth goal in nine games and Norwegian defender Erlend Johnsen his first in four years at the club.

West Ham United left out top scorer Lee Chapman but registered their first win in eight games, 2-1 at home to Ipswich, thanks to goals from Matthew Rush, playing only his second game of the season, and Trevor Morley.

Flo, with only one goal in his last 20 games, condemned Liverpool to their first home league defeat since September as Sheffield United staged their second dramatic fight-back in a week.

Sheffield, who came from 2-0 down to West Ham Monday, went behind to an Ian Rush goal after just three minutes.

Flo equalised a minute after half time and seized the winner 18 minutes from time, out-jumping Neil Ruddock to glance a header from Franz Carr's centre over goal keeper David James.

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Weather conditions postpone crowning Faisali as Jordan's soccer champions

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Weather conditions disrupted the 19th week of the first division soccer championship and postponed the crowning of Al Faisali as Jordan's 1993 soccer champions who merely needed to draw with Al Baqaa to clinch the title.

Thousands of fans who had thronged Amman's International Stadium Friday afternoon, were heavily disappointed when officials at Al Hussein Sports City declared that conditions at the stadium were unsuitable for yet another postponement in the competition.

Also at Salt Stadium, heavy fog compelled the referee of the Hussein-Yarmouk match to suspend the game in the 51st minute as both teams were held to a goalless draw.

The only match held Friday was at Irbid's Al Hassan Sports City, in which Al Arabi upset Al Ramtha 1-0 to equal Al Baqaa's 27 points in the overall standings.

It was Al Ramtha's second consecutive defeat after losing to Al Wihdat 3-1 last week, making them remain in sixth place for now with 29 points.

Although both teams played a defensive game at the beginning, Al Ramtha needed a win to secure its place in the standings, while Al Arabi needed to give it their best hoping to

avoid relegation.

The match's sole goal was scored in the 45th minute when Al Arabi's striker Ayman Al Omari hit a header that tapped the goalpost before Mohammad Alawneh returned it back to score his team's winning goal.

Meanwhile, in three of this week's matches held Thursday, Sahab stunned Al Ahli with a 3-1 win, Al Jazireh ended Al Qadissieh's unbeaten second round record when they scored a 3-2 victory, while Al Wihdat overcame Fubeis 2-1.

Al Jazireh's win over Al Qadissieh was probably the week's most important result, giving Al Jazireh a glimpse of hope in avoiding relegation as they moved away from the last four to 7th place. On the other hand, Al Qadissieh's unexpected defeat may have eventually hurt their chances of capturing the no. 2 spot.

Al Jazireh's carefully executed offence made Al Qadissieh retreat to defensive positions early on in the match and hindered their effort to reach their opponent's goal.

Al Jazireh thus succeeded in scoring first in the 25th minute as both teams lost repeated chances to score until Al Qadissieh's Mustafa Adam netted in the equaliser by a header in the 45th minute.

Adam failed to score for his team early in the second half when his shot hit the post, while Al Jazireh displayed

their determination to win as they scored a second goal in the 78th minute.

Al Qadissieh however, soon equalised by Ra'ed Al Momani in the 83rd minute.

Amjad Diyab ended Al Jazireh's powerful performance when he scored three minutes later, sealing his team's 3-2 win that gave them 28 points in the 12 team standings.

In another match, Sahab scored a vital surprising 3-1 win over Al Ahli by closely guarding their pivotal strikers Husam Hammash and Amer Wali in the absence of injured Mousa Shteyan and Khalil Fataftah.

Sahab's Mohammad Odeh gave his team the lead in the 23rd minute. He then scored again when he converted striker Mohammad Ashhab's pass to a header in the 30th minute.

Sahab then lost two scoring chances before Al Ahli's Nart Yadaj scored for his team in the 40th minute.

Al Ahli seemed to lack coordination in the second half while Sahab did not relent or ease their offence as Ashhab again lost a chance to score before successfully netting in his team's third goal in the 70th minute.

With this win, Sahab raised their tally to 20 points, but are still among the last four and will have to score more wins to avoid relegation.

Newcomers to the division, Al Fubeis, stood up to former champions Al Wihdat before losing 2-1 in another of Thursday's matches.

Although Fubeis took the lead by a goal from Khader Mubarak in the 4th minute, Al Wihdat took total control throughout the first half.

Young striker Ali Juma'a repeatedly tried to equalise for Al Wihdat, before Jamal Mahmoud managed to score a goal from a corner kick in the 27th minute.

Mahmoud provided team-mate Marwan Al Shamali and Juma'a with superb passes but both lacked concentration.

Both teams then lost some scoring chances, before Shamali was tackled in the box and scored from the penalty shot to give his team a 2-1 win.

However, Fubeis fervently challenged the referee's call and following the match announced that they would withdraw from the competition unless the Jordan Soccer Federation looked into their complaint.

Al Fubeis' officials maintain that the penalty awarded to Al Wihdat was unwarranted and that the referee had failed to award them a penalty on a more serious and clear tackle.

The loss greatly affects Fubeis' chances of staying in the first division, while the win promotes Al Wihdat's hassle for runner-up position.

Agassi loses to Sampras in Osaka

OSAKA, Japan (R) — Andre Agassi, struggling with a painful injury and the demands of a rain-hit schedule, lasted only 55 minutes before losing to world number one Pete Sampras in the Salem Open semi-finals Saturday.

The fifth-seeded Agassi, who had been forced to complete his quarter-final earlier Saturday because of rain on Friday, was beaten 6-3 6-1 by his fellow American.

Agassi said he suffered pain from a torn rib cartilage whenever he breathed in.

"I hurt myself early in the tournament and it got worse," Agassi said. "It will take a couple of weeks before its gets better but I'm not scheduled to play for two weeks anyhow."

Earlier in the day, Agassi had toiled through two sets against fellow American David Wheaton to finish off their quarter-final 7-6 6-7 6-3.

"It's never easy to play two sets and a match after. That was to Pete's advantage," Agassi said.

Sampras noticed his opponent struggling. "Once I was hitting him slice backhands he looked in pain and I knew it was a problem. It affected his serve," said the top seed who will meet French qualifier Lionel Roux in Sunday's final. Roux, who has beaten former world number one Ivan Lendl and sixth seeded American Aaron Krickstein along the way, defeated Henrik Holm of Sweden 6-2 1-6 6-3 in the other semifinal.

Leading by a set and 3-1 when rain halted play Friday, Agassi had looked set for a quick victory over Wheaton.

The powerful Wheaton had other ideas when the match resumed. He was helped by the fifth seed squandering four match points in the second set tie-break.

That was as far as his comeback went. Agassi regained control, breaking Wheaton in the opening game of the final set and cruised home 7-6 6-7 6-3.



Pete Sampras

Pierce, Majoli score upsets in Hilton Head

HILTON HEAD, South Carolina (R) — Seventh seed Mary Pierce of France demonstrated her great potential once again and unseeded Croatian Iva Majoli picked off her third consecutive seed in quarter-final upsets at the Family Circle Cup tennis tournament Friday.

Rising star Pierce used a consistent serve and a big finish to put away top seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, runner-up here last year, 6-4 2-6 6-1 to reach the quarter-finals.

The 40th-ranked Majoli kept her surprising run going by ousting 11th-ranked American Lindsay Davenport.

Nigeria moves into semis of Africa n Nations Cup

TUNIS (R) — Giant striker Rachid Yekini propelled Nigeria into the semifinal of the African Nations Cup by scoring twice in the 2-0 win over Zaire Saturday.

Yekini, the tournament's leading scorer with four goals, broke the deadlock six minutes into the second half with a thundering shot on the half-volley.

His second came from the penalty spot 20 minutes later after he had been brought

down by goalkeeper Bilolo Tambwe.

Tambwe was sent off for the offence, leaving Mpa Kasango to face the spot-kick on his international debut. Yekini converted with a shot to the right of the substitute goalkeeper.

Nigeria also gave a debut to Norwich striker Efan Ekoku. He managed only one shot at goal and was substituted early in the second half.

Duncan extends lead in Safari Rally

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya's Ian Duncan extended his lead to 19 minutes on the third day of the Safari Rally, the third round of the World Championship Saturday.

Duncan, four times Kenyan rally champion, damaged his Toyota's suspension when he hit in Impala during the second section of the day, but he lost only two minutes and later increased his advantage over Japan's Kenjiro Shinozuka, driving a Mitsubishi.

Duncan has never won a world championship rally but all Toyota's hopes rest on him as his French team mate, Didier Auriol, was lying 50 minutes behind Shinozuka.

"It's hell. This rally, it's rough. It's unpredictable," said Auriol.

Patrick Njiru was in fourth place in his Subaru. The Kenyan lost 18 minutes early in the day when he hit a deep hole in the road too quickly and damaged the car's body-work.

He was lying nearly 30 minutes ahead of his British team mate Richard Burns, who has been slowed down by dust.

Burns, the British champion, lost 40 minutes thanks to an accident when the brakes failed late on the second day. Repairs were not completed until Saturday morning and he had to overtake four slower cars.

Heat overcome Pacers to move toward playoff spot

MIAMI (R) — Harold Miner scored 11 of his 15 points in the fourth quarter, including five in a key 15-2 run, and the Miami Heat snapped a six-game losing streak with a 101-91 win over the Indiana Pacers Friday.

The win by the Heat, enabled them to leap over the Pacers and the New Jersey Nets into the race for a playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

In Chicago, B.J. Armstrong had 23 points and Steve Kerr had five points in a key 10-2 fourth quarter run as the Chicago Bulls beat the Detroit Pistons for the sixth straight time, 102-95.

Chicago led 84-82 with 8:08 left in the fourth when they took control. They took an 86-82 lead on a basket by Pete Myers, before Sean Elliott netted two free throws to cut Chicago's lead back to two.

But Kerr nailed a three to make it 89-84 Bulls and Scott Williams converted a three-point play to make it 92-84.

In Boston, Don MacLean scored 28 points and Rex Chapman scored five of Washington's final seven points, leading the Bullets to a 99-95 win over the Boston Celtics, snapping a nine-game losing streak.

Chapman snapped a 94-94 tie with 2:20 remaining on a 15-footer from the right side of the foul line.

He scored five points during a 7-1 Washington run to close the game.

Chapman had 17 points for Washington, as did teammate

Mitchell Butler.

In Dallas, Charlotte's Alonzo Mourning had 25 points and 13 rebounds, and Dallas's Jamal Mashburn missed two free throws with 2.5 seconds left in the fourth quarter, as the Hornets defeated the Mavericks, 106-104.

The loss was the 16th straight for the Mavericks, who have not won since beating the Hornets Feb. 24.

The win was the third in the last four games for the Hornets.

In New Jersey, Anfernee Hardaway's driving slam with 1.6 seconds left lifted the Orlando Magic to a 98-96 win over the New Jersey Nets.

Hardaway drove the middle for the game-winner after Orlando rebounded Dennis Scott's miss from the right on its last possession.

Nick Anderson had 19 points for the Magic while Shaquille O'Neal was limited to just 17.

In Philadelphia, Rod Strick-

land tied a career high with 30 points and handed out 13 assists and Clifford Robinson also scored 30 points as the Portland Trail Blazers handed the Philadelphia 76ers their ninth straight loss, 111-100.

Clyde Drexler added 22 points and 12 rebounds for the Blazers.

Orlando Woolridge had 21 points and Jeff Malone scored 20 for Philadelphia.

In Los Angeles, Nick Van Exel scored a career-high 31 points, including five three pointers, to lead the Los Angeles Lakers to their third win in four games, a 101-88 defeat of the Houston Rockets.

The Lakers, who beat Houston for the first time this season in four games, are 3-1 since Magic Johnson replaced Randy Pfund as head coach.

The loss broke Houston's three-game winning streak and dropped the Rockets to 9-3 in their last 12 games.

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	PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE	
	INDECENT PROPOSAL Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Holly Floria & Alicia Anne in BIKINI ISLAND Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD '1' DEMOLITION MAN CONCORD '2' THE FUGITIVE Shows: 12:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:15		Opening Soon A political comedy Forbidden X Forbidden	Watch for the surprise — The next play....	Since the actors are abroad the theatre is closed It will re-open on April 6, 1994 for two weeks in the last performances of: "Arab Summit Conference"	

NEWS IN BRIEF

Police kill militant in south Egypt

ASSIUT, Egypt (R) — Police in the south Egyptian province of Assiut on Saturday shot dead a militant wanted for killing a policeman, security sources said. They said the man, Hamdi Mahmoud, was arrested last year on charges of killing a state security lieutenant-colonel in March but he escaped during a transfer between prisons. Police said Mahmoud died in a shootout after they raided the flat he was hiding in near the town of Abu Tig, on the Nile 345 kilometres south of Cairo. Assiut province is a stronghold of the militant Gamaa Al Islamiya, the main group fighting to overthrow the Egyptian government and replace it with a strict Islamic state. Some 350 people, mainly militants and policemen, have been killed in political violence in Egypt over the past two years.

Leading South Sudanese quits parliament

KHARTOUM (R) — A leading Christian politician from southern Sudan has resigned from the country's appointed parliament, a Khartoum newspaper reported on Saturday. The independent Al Sudani Al Doula said Andrew Wieu, a priest, had quit the Transitional National Assembly to concentrate on his church activities. The assembly had accepted his resignation, the daily said. Sudan's strongly Islamic government in Khartoum has been waging a civil war for nearly 11 years with the mainly Christian and animist south.

Tunisia bans French newspaper

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia has banned distribution of the French newspaper Liberation, the local newspaper La Presse reported on Saturday. It said the authorities were angered because Liberation published an article by a Tunisian opposition figure but would not print a reply from a supporter of the government. La Presse accused the French paper of "flagrant bias" and acting "like a highway bandit." Another French newspaper, Le Monde, was banned last month.

Bush plot verdicts set for June 4

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's state security court said on Saturday it would pass judgement on June 4 on 11 Iraqis and three Kuwaitis accused of involvement in a plot to kill former U.S. President George Bush. The court hearing the 10-month-old trial set the date after the defence presented the last of its closing arguments. The court has in the past twice set a date for judgement and then postponed it. The court on Sept. 11 scheduled the verdicts for Oct. 30, on that date it rescheduled the verdicts for Dec. 25, saying the case needed time and care. Two of the 14 have admitted varying levels of involvement in the alleged plot to blow up Mr. Bush.

Egypt to compensate victims of violence

ASSIUT (R) — Compensation will be paid to families of three people killed in crossfire between militants and police in the south Egyptian province of Assiut last week, security sources said on Saturday. The sources said that according to Assiut Governor Sameeh Al Saied, 20,000 pounds (\$3,950) would be paid to the families of a taxi driver, a teacher and a woman university student who died after a suspected militant travelling in their taxi opened fire at police in the town of Al Ghanaim. Police chased the taxi and shot dead the militant and the three people and arrested two other passengers thought to be militants. Four policemen were wounded in the violence.

Kuwait ready to stop any Iraqi advance

KUWAIT (R) — Iraqi troops conducting a campaign against opponents in the south of Iraq pose a threat to Kuwait but any attack would be repulsed, the emirate's defence minister said in remarks published on Saturday. "The presence of the regular Iraqi army in the south for the purpose of crushing of the uprising in southern Iraq is a threat to the country," the minister, Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah, was quoted as saying by newspapers. "The troops could receive orders to move further south towards Kuwait. The way the Iraqi troops are now scattered (in their deployment) does not pose an immediate threat to Kuwait. But this could change. The decision is surely with (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein. "Kuwait is completely ready to repulse any attack," Sheikh Ali said the remarks to Kuwaiti reporters late on Wednesday. Newspapers agreed to hold the report over the Thursday and Friday weekend, when only a few of them publish.

U.S. military forces drop to 1.7 million

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. military forces dropped to 1.7 million at the end of February, the Defence Department said Friday, on their way to a cut to 1.4 million. It said the active duty forces as of Feb. 28 included 566,318 army people, 491,092 navy, 455,081 air force and 175,838 marines. Active duty forces rose to about 2.1 million during the cold war but President Bill Clinton plans to cut them to 1.4 million to help reduce huge federal budget deficits.

PLO employee shot dead in Tunis

TUNIS (AP) — A Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) employee believed to be involved in a counterfeit money racket was shot and killed Friday night, sources and eyewitnesses said Saturday. An unknown gunman opened fire with a handgun on Khalil Abu Moalek as he parked his car at a suburban shopping centre, according to eyewitnesses, who said the assailant escaped in a waiting car. Officials at PLO headquarters in the Tunisian capital confirmed that Abu Moalek, 33, who worked in the organisation's political department, died in a hospital from wounds to the head and chest. PLO officials refused to comment on reports that Abu Moalek was engaged in racketeering.

Second Iranian triplets delivered in 5 months

NICOSIA (AP) — A doctor in the southern Iranian province of Khuzestan this week delivered her second set of triplets in just over five months, according to an Iranian newspaper. Leila Nayabzadeh gave birth to a boy and two girls by caesarean section last Monday in the city of Behbahan under the care of Dr. Anjana Pankaj, an Indian gynaecologist, the Tehran Times said. Dr. Pankaj, of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, had already delivered two girls and a boy last Nov. 23, also by caesarean, the newspaper said. All six infants and the two mothers were healthy, the Times said in an article to be published Sunday. An advertisement for the birth was published Saturday to the Times.

Goldstein widow refuses to testify

TEL AVIV (AP) — The widow of the man who committed the Hebron mosque massacre, and who may have tried to stop him, refuses to testify before Israel's commission of inquiry, reports said. Miriam Goldstein turned a compromise offer from the commission to testify behind closed doors on Sunday, Israel's Channel Two news said. The commission was weighing whether to use its power of subpoena to force Mrs. Goldstein to testify, the Itim news agency said.

Zhirinovskiy wins absolute party power

MOSCOW (AP) — The widow of the man who committed the Hebron mosque massacre, and who may have tried to stop him, refuses to testify before Israel's commission of inquiry, reports said. Miriam Goldstein turned a compromise offer from the commission to testify behind closed doors on Sunday, Israel's Channel Two news said. The commission was weighing whether to use its power of subpoena to force Mrs. Goldstein to testify, the Itim news agency said.

U.N. team begins Kabul mission

KABUL (Agencies) — Tunisia's ex-foreign minister, Mahmoud Mestiri, led a United Nations peace mission to Afghanistan's war-battered capital on Saturday.

During his three-day trip to Kabul, Mr. Mestiri will meet Afghanistan's warring leaders in an attempt to broker a permanent truce to end nearly two years of vicious factional fighting that has left about 12,000 people dead, most of them civilians.

However, few people in Kabul expect a lasting peace. The warring leadership has signed at least three peace agreements but all of them have been broken.

Their most recent peace agreement was signed in mid-1993 in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. But it was short-lived. On Jan. 1, Afghanistan's rebel Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar launched a ferocious offensive to topple his enemy, President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

In three months of bitter fighting the warring factions have killed at least 1,100 people, according to figures given by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Entire neighbourhoods have been flattened.

At least 12,000 people have been wounded and tens of thousands more left homeless and made refugees in their own country.

Mr. Rabbani and Mr. Hekmatyar have agreed to a ceasefire during the three-day visit by the five-member U.N. mission.

"Finding a solution is the main, if not the only, aim of our visit," Mr. Mestiri told reporters on his arrival from Pakistan at an airbase north of Kabul.

Mr. Mestiri was due to meet Mr. Rabbani and Mr. Hekmatyar, who is based in Charayab, 20 kilometres southeast of Kabul, as well as leaders of other factions in the quarrelling coalition government. He is due to return to Pakistan on Monday.

Early on Saturday, three rockets slammed into the Rabbani-held television hill near the city centre but the ceasefire later took hold across the capital.

Both sides traded rocket and artillery fire on Friday but no details of casualties were available.

Rocket fire from forces led by Mr. Hekmatyar pounded Kabul the day before, killing at least two people and injuring more than 70, hospitals reported.

Each side blamed the other for starting the fighting.

Mr. Mestiri flew from Pakistan to the eastern Afghan town of Jalalabad on Wednesday for a one-day visit and his first meetings inside Afghanistan.

He met the local governing council, which has remained neutral in the current fighting, and visited camps that house an estimated 110,000 refugees who have fled there from Kabul since the latest battles erupted on New Year's Day.

Bomb blast in Istanbul bazaar kills 4, wounds 13

ISTANBUL (Agencies) — A bomb exploded in Istanbul's covered bazaar on Saturday, killing two and injuring at least 13 people, Turkish officials said.

Doctors at two hospitals said at least six foreign tourists were among the injured. Some of the 13 were in critical condition.

It was the second bombing of the popular tourist site in 10 days. Four people, including two Romanians, were injured in a blast that hit a public toilet near the bazaar on March 24.

The Anatolia news agency identified the dead as Munira Nizim, 49, a Tunisian woman,

and Javier Castro, a Spanish man. It said Mrs. Najan's 17-year-old son, Mehdi Najan, two Spaniards, two French men, and a Lebanese man were also wounded.

In Madrid a Spanish foreign ministry spokesman denied that a Spaniard had been killed. He quoted the Spanish consul in Istanbul as saying three Spanish tourists were injured.

Police said the bomb had been planted in a box in front of a jewellery shop and exploded at 10:30 a.m. (0730 GMT), shattering windows and smashing furniture in nearby shops.

State Minister and government spokesman Yildirim Aktuna visited the site and condemned the bombing.

"This was a cowardly, sneaky attack," he told reporters.

Mr. Aktuna said additional measures would be taken to safeguard tourist attractions and crowded sites.

The 10:50 a.m. blast was believed to have been caused by a time bomb placed in a portable shoe-shining box near jewellery stores close to an exit at the 500-year-old bazaar.



PAKISTANI DELEGATION: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Saturday received at the Royal Court a delegation representing the Pakistani Command College. Prince Hassan briefed the delegation, which included college teachers and students, on the situation in the region and the latest developments in the Middle East peace process. The Crown Prince also dwelt on Jordanian-Pakistani relations and the need to enhance them.

Expellees anxiously await word on bid to return home

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian expellees living in Jordan agonised Saturday without knowing whether they were included in a list approved by Israel for return to the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip this week.

Many of those whose names were in a list of 32 names submitted by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to Israel during their negotiations on implementing self-rule said they did not know whether their names were in a list of 32 that had been approved by Israel.

Tayseer Arouri, who was expelled in August 1989 after being charged with directing the intifada, said he was unable to confirm whether he was among the 32.

"I tried through all means to find out whether I would be allowed to return home," said Mr. Arouri, a member of the Palestine People's Party (PPP) who served as an advisor to the Palestinian peace negotiating team which held talks with Israel until the surprise Sept. 13 accord was unveiled.

"I contacted senior PLO officials and some Executive Committee members in Tunis," Mr. Arouri said in an interview with the Jordan Times.

"It was told that the list in (PLO Chairman Yasser) Arafat's pocket and a copy is with the negotiators in Cairo," he said. "Except Arafat and the negotiators, nobody seems to know who will be allowed to return home."

At least four others whose names were mentioned in the local press as possible returnees this week echoed Mr. Arouri and said they were also in the dark about their fate.

"It is killing not to know whether we can go home or not," said one of them, who, like others, preferred anonymity for fear of undermining his chances.

According to PLO officials, Israel and the PLO are expected to discuss the fate of

the 22 whose bid to return home has been put on hold by Israel when they meet in Cairo to resume self-rule negotiations Sunday.

"Until they meet and come up with a decision, there is little chance of knowing who will actually return home this week," said a senior PLO source.

Marwan Barghouti, a prominent Palestinian student activist from Bir Zeit University, and an activist of Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction, appeared certain that he would be returning home.

Mr. Barghouti, who was expelled in 1987, told the Jordan Times that he and some of the others in the approved list will be crossing the bridge to the West Bank on Monday.

He provided the names of most of the people in the approved list and said he and others will be crossing the bridge to the West Bank on Monday. He said the list he had was the one approved by Israel.

The 16 names that Mr. Barghouti provided included that of Mr. Arouri, apparently, there is little communication between Mr. Barghouti, who is form Fatah, and Mr. Arouri whose PPP has been critical of the way Fatah boss Arafat has been handling PLO decision making.

Mr. Barghouti said Israel had agreed to the list of 32 during a meeting with the PLO in Cairo on Thursday.

The approved list, according to Mr. Barghouti, included: Journalist Akram Haniyeh, Arafat advisor Jibril Rjoub, Mohammad Zahlan, Jamal Zokhut, Samir Sheibat, Amin Makbol, Khalil Ashour, Jihad Museineh, Husam Khader, Jamal Shati, Mursi Abu Ghuweil, Ahmad Nasr, Abdullah Samadaneh and Ahmad Dweik in addition to Mr. Barghouti himself and Mr. Arouri.

Many of those in the approved list as given by Mr. Barghouti are members of Fatah, expelled before and after the intifada began.

Mr. Barghouti said most of the returnees will be crossing the King Hussein Bridge while others will be entering the Gaza Strip from Egypt.

In May 1993, Israel allowed 30 Palestinian expellees to return home in a gesture to encourage the PLO to resume peace talks which were suspended following the Jewish state's expulsion of more than 415 Palestinians to Lebanon.

But it refused to include in that group any Palestinian who was expelled from the occupied territories over charges related to the intifada, which began in December 1987.

Most of those who returned in that batch were Palestinian activists who resisted cooperating with the occupation authorities following the Jewish state's seizure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the 1967 war.

The latest batch expected to return home this week include many Palestinians expelled on intifada-related charges, marking the second time that Israel has allowed such expellees to return.

The occupation authorities allowed those expelled to South Lebanon in December 1992 to return in December 1993 after a one-year exile.

Those expelled by the occupation forces after they seized the lands in 1967 — estimated at nearly 2,500 — are dealt with differently than those who fled their homeland or were forced out during the actual war. The PLO estimates that their number, including dependents, now stands at 875,000, with the bulk of them living in Jordan.

Israel has ruled out any return of Palestinians in large numbers during the interim period envisaged in the Sept. 13 accord and says that their fate is an issue for negotiations.

The PLO has been sending conflicting signals on the issue with no clear indication when the Palestinians who left their homes or refugee camps in the occupied territories in 1967 can hope that their plight will come up for discussions.

Sabbah: Papal visit to Holy Land could wait

ROME (AP) — The leader of Catholics in the Holy Land said Saturday that Pope John Paul II should not make a pilgrimage there until Palestinians in the occupied territories are granted open access to Jerusalem.

The Pope has long said he wanted to visit Jerusalem, a possibility that became more likely when the Vatican and Israel signed a diplomatic accord in December.

Monsignor Michael Sabbah, Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, said the Pope should consider such a pilgrimage only when Christians in Bethlehem can travel to Jerusalem without a military permit, and "when the Christians here, like all the other inhabitants of the occupied territories, will have a certain freedom, will not be put under such severe security measures. Archbishop Sabbah, a Palestinian, was referring to Israel's periodic closures of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, which bar Palestinians from reaching Israel and holy sites in Jerusalem.

He made his comments in Jerusalem to RAI state radio, which provided a text of the remarks in Rome, for an Easter Sunday Broadcast.

In the interview, Archbishop Sabbah said that peace in the Holy Land seems to be proceeding on a political level, "but there is no progress on the popular level, in the hearts of the people."

He also criticised Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

It is necessary to tell the settlers that they do not want peace. It is necessary to want peace, to have it in one's heart, and to leave people's homes to themselves," he said.

"The settlers are not in their homes, they are in the homes of others," he said. Archbishop Sabbah is the top Roman Catholic clergyman in the Holy Land. He was appointed in 1988, and is responsible for Roman Catholics in Israel, the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jordan and Cyprus.

Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip on March 31, 1993, following a wave of anti-Israeli violence which Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin feared would erode public support in Israel for the negotiations with the Palestinians.

The closure barred most of the two million Palestinians from reaching Israel, including Arab East Jerusalem.

In recent months the closure had gradually been eased, and only men between the ages of 16 and 45 were required to ask the army for a permit. But after the Feb. 25 Hebron mosque massacre, the closure was clamped back tight again, for fear of Palestinian revenge attacks.

The Pope has often said he would consider a trip to the Holy Land the culmination of his papacy. The last Pope to go there was Paul VI in 1964.

The Vatican and Israel recognised each other last December after nearly 2000 years of often hostile relations between Christians and Jews. They are expected to establish full diplomatic relations this year.

The Pope, who turns 74 next month, was due to baptise 27 people at the Vatican on Saturday after marking his Via Crucis (stations of the cross) procession around Rome's colosseum on Friday night with a powerful declaration of Christian unity.

Catholic holy week ceremonies culminate on Sunday when he celebrates mass in St. Peter's square and delivers the twice-yearly "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) message.

Officials said the 183-seat jetliner was two years old and had between 5,000 and 7,000 flying hours. It was one of several Airbus jets leased to replace aging Soviet-era jets with poor safety records.

The crash drew unwanted attention to air safety in Russia.

COLUMN

Clintons go biking around Coronado

SAN DIEGO (R) — Wearing black safety helmets, President Bill Clinton and his wife, Hillary, rode bicycles on palm tree-lined streets Saturday on the last day of their spring vacation. Seemingly without a care in the world, the Clintons slowly rode by a golf course and through the winding side-streets in the picture-postcard neighbourhood surrounding the seaside house on the peninsula of Coronado where they have stayed since Sunday. Indeed, the Clintons would have looked like any typical American couple, except for the protective motorcade trailing behind, which included a black limousine, two trucks carrying Secret Service agents and a couple of police cars. The Clintons waved to bystanders thrilled to see them and some children on roller blades tried to keep up with them. Mr. Clinton had on blue shorts and Hillary wore long green work-out pants. Stopping at Bay Books, the Clinton browsed for a little while. Mr. Clinton bought two paperbacks, a mystery called Dead In The Water by Dana Stabenow and an adventure mystery called Black Blade by Eric Lustbader. "They talked to a few people, said 'hi,'" said book store salesman Brian Turner. "It was real neat." Then it was back on the bikes for the ride back to their residence just before the west coast sunset.

Russians get silly for a day

MOSCOW (AP) — Tasty new "vodka bars" compete with Mars and Snickers. Chemical arms producers invent spray-on tights. Mikhail Gorbachev uses anti-baldness medicine to grow hair over his famous birthmark. And that's the way it wasn't. April Fools' Day 1994 in Russia. It seemed Friday that most news media said much of the nation had their backs painted white — the Russian equivalent of saying "your shoe's untied — ha ha." Jokesters and hoaxsters were out in force, lending credence to a popular rhyme which translates to "it's April 1st, don't believe anybody." The abundance of silliness appeared to confirm that Russians have returned to a grin-and-bear-it — or at least bear-it — outlook during continued hard times. Traditional April 1st jokes virtually disappeared in 1991 and 1992 at the height of wrenching political and economic upheavals, and only began reemerging last year. It's also a dramatic change from Soviet days, when schoolchildren and family members might have shared April yuks but such widespread levity wasn't tolerated by ever-stern censors. This year's Russian media spoofs poked fun at everyone from Ames to Zhirinovskiy: Moskovsky Komsomolsky published a picture depicting Gorbachev with curly hair, saying it had appeared after the last Soviet president visited South Korea and tested a new anti-baldness medicine.

Poll: Britons among world's gloomiest people

LONDON (R) — Britons are among the world's most dissatisfied and pessimistic people, a poll conducted in Britain, Germany, Japan and the United States reported Saturday. Results of the poll of more than 5,500 people interviewed about their view of the world between March 5 and 11, were published simultaneously in Britain's Guardian newspaper, Germany's Der Spiegel, Japan's Asahi Shimbun and the New York Times. It found that 85 per cent of Britons were dissatisfied with the general situation of the world compared with 82 per cent of Germans, 67 per cent of Americans and 66 per cent of Japanese, the Guardian said. Only 13 per cent of British people were optimistic that things would improve in the next five years, against 16 per cent of Japanese, 18 per cent of Germans and 19 per cent of Americans. Britons were also the least likely to trust people in other leading countries, 50 per cent distrusting Germans, 55 per cent distrusting the Japanese and 67 per cent distrusting the Chinese. The paper said the poll painted a depressing picture, showing that most people in each country believe the world has become a more dangerous place since the end of the cold war.